



Introduction by the President, **Mike Watson**

I hope the last 12 months have been a fruitful time for you and your mountaineering adventures – whether, like me, you have been enjoying the recent fantastic weather in the Cuillins, challenging yourself at the local climbing wall, discovering a new favourite walk or scramble, or venturing into the hills under snow. Mountaineering Scotland itself has been on quite a journey this year – one that has proved a challenge to distil into the following eight pages!



do. We were delighted to share this with a bumper audience of MSPs and opinion-formers at Holyrood in September, at a parliamentary reception we jointly hosted with friends at Scottish Mountain Rescue. The cross-sector Mountain Safety Group that we chair continues

to seek ways to promote self-reliance and risk awareness among hill goers. In the last year, these efforts have been advanced thanks to additional funding from St John Scotland which has enabled us to expand our training programme for university and college mountaineering clubs.

We reached out beyond our membership audience with our ever-successful winter mountain safety lecture series held at outdoor shops across the nation, and, a virtual twist on this, we brought together a panel of experts for a Q&A via Facebook Live which got fantastic viewing figures.

The phenomenal growth of indoor climbing cuts across the generations. Our ClimbScotland initiative has provided tailored support for parents and schools who offer young people the opportunity to participate and progress in climbing. While the dream of selection for the GB Olympics team in 2020 has given a focus for our elite athletes and our climbing competitions have been more popular than ever, we continue to encourage an appreciation for outdoor climbing for those who start out on an indoor wall too.

Our final change of 2017-18 saw us bid farewell to CEO David Gibson in March 2018. He retired after ten extraordinarily successful years, developing Mountaineering Scotland into the organisation it is today. I have every confidence that his successor, Stuart Younie, will continue this progressive approach and look forward to a bright future for Mountaineering Scotland.

Mike Watson,
Mountaineering Scotland President

A thriving membership is critical to our success and capacity to represent Scotland's mountaineering community. In the last year we achieved some of our best ever results in recruiting new individual members and, importantly, grew the loyalty and retention of existing members too. When we ask new members why they joined it is often on the recommendation of friends or family, so we must thank you all for helping spread the word and ask that you continue to share the benefits of membership with those who share your passion for the hills.

We have welcomed a variety of new clubs too and worked closely with many long-established ones to adapt to the opportunities and challenges of a growing but evolving 'marketplace' for outdoor activities.

A great example of what membership growth enables us to achieve is the appointment of our new full-time Access & Conservation Officer, Davie Black, who joined our team in March 2018. The expansion of this role (formerly just covering access) was informed by our Conservation Survey last autumn in which you gave us your priorities for addressing the issues affecting Scotland's mountain landscapes and our access to them. With Davie's experience and expertise we are now well placed to develop our work in this area and will be publishing a new Conservation Strategy and Action Plan in the coming months. Watch this space.

Raising awareness of mountain safety and skills remains at the heart of what we

Membership - The last 10 years

2008
10,300

2009
10,400

2010
10,950

2011
11,200

2012
11,350

2013
12,100

2014
12,500

2015
12,750

2016
13,400

2017
13,850



Making the most of your membership

- Negotiated new discounts and special offers for members and clubs, bringing the total to over 100 products and services.
- Provided advice and support to over 85 club enquiries – on matters ranging from recruitment and retention to training and development, insurance and risk to huts and kit.
- Developed tailored resources to help clubs navigate through the changes in data protection legislation and keep their members' data secure.
- Recognised the contribution of volunteers to Scotland's mountaineering community and the talent of young Scottish climbers, through the Mountaineering Scotland and ClimbScotland Awards.
- Developed popular new 'Start your adventures here' advice on our website including a navigation quiz, dusk to dawn hillwalking and dogs in the hills.
- Provided an online search to help members book accommodation through our network of 22 club huts, plus three 'national' huts – a service made possible by the dedication of the many volunteers who manage and maintain them, and those who are involved in the Huts Advisory Group.

Growing participation and supporting clubs

- Achieved an 8% annual growth in our individual membership, reaching nearly 7000 individual members in March 2018.
- Attracted more young people than ever before, with a 12% rise in under-18s and an 11% rise in family members.
- Achieved a 2% rise in the proportion of women members, increasing to 32%, highlighting inspirational women at all levels in mountaineering and encouraging more to progress through the sport.
- Welcomed 16 new affiliated clubs: five adult-focussed, eight youth-focussed and three university clubs.
- Rewarded 40 young Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award achievers with a year's complimentary membership to nurture a life-long love of Scotland's mountains
- Helped develop the UK's first ever Paraclimbing Club and provided new resources to help people with disabilities get hillwalking
- Worked closely with BME hillwalking and activities clubs "Boots & Beards" and "Bonnie Boots" to provide navigation training and intro to indoor climbing, resulting in a weekly club climbing meet.

“We are very satisfied with the services that Mountaineering Scotland provide. The magazine is excellent with a good range of news and articles.”

Club secretary

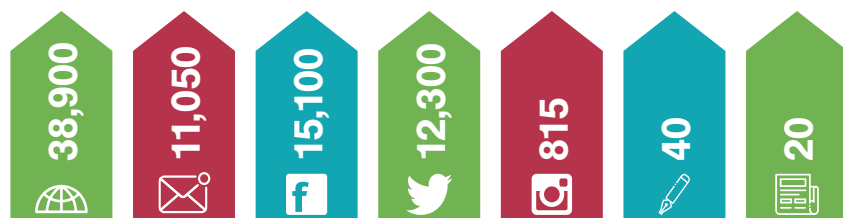
“Your huts advisory group, led by John Leftley, is really important for exchanging information and developing best practice for hut custodians like us”

Custodian of a club hut

Our communications

38,900 website unique visits per month
11,050 email newsletter subscribers
15,100 Facebook page likes
12,300 Twitter followers

815 Instagram followers
40 entries in Mountain Writing Competition
20 press releases, all achieving media coverage



Our people

6934 members of clubs
6889 individual members
157 affiliated clubs
73 associate members
52 ClimbScotland Partners
120 volunteers
12 staff



“A lot of lightbulb moments were had during the training course and a lot of insights were shared. I’ve preached to a lot of people how good and affordable it was.”

navigation, avalanche awareness and ski touring.

- Extended our skills training for university and college mountaineering club students, thanks to extra funding from St John Scotland, enabling the provision of a SJS Mountaineering Instructor in autumn as well as winter for the first time.
- Chaired the Mountain Safety Group, working closely with partners to encourage collaboration to address major mountain safety issues.
- Worked in partnership with Snowsports Scotland on a ski touring advisory group with Scotland’s managed ski resorts and ski touring clubs, giving advice on how to access piste areas safely and responsibly.
- Highlighted the risks to compasses and navigation caused by magnetic fastenings in outdoor clothing.

Mountain skills and safety

- Developed new ways to reach hillwalkers and mountaineers with essential safety messages – including a Facebook Live Q&A panel show which reached 30,000 people.
- Jointly hosted a parliamentary reception at Holyrood with Scottish Mountain Rescue to promote mountain safety – attracted over 100 guests, 18 MSPs, including three Scottish Government Ministers.
- Increased the number of – and course participant satisfaction with – mountain skills courses we offer – including navigation, scrambling, summer mountain leader, first aid, winter skills, winter

“Very informative course, just the right tone - plenty of practice, building confidence and knowledge. In spite of the miserable conditions, I enjoyed the whole day.”

Skills and training stats

- 900** people came to our winter safety lectures and other talks
- 350** members attended our mountain skills courses
- 315** students from university and college clubs were trained in mountain safety and skills
- 91%** “standard of instruction was outstanding”
- 80%** “exceptionally good value for money”

Our thanks go to...

All the members and freelance instructors who support our courses, Cotswold Outdoors, Craigdon Mountain Sports, Glenmore Lodge, Herald & Times, Mill Cottage Trust, Munro Society, St John Scotland, Scottish Mountain Rescue, Scottish Mountaineering Trust, sportscotland, Tiso, Walkhighlands, Winter Sports Legacy Trust



Respecting Scotland's mountains

- Nearly 1500 members spent an average of 20 minutes completing our comprehensive survey of members' views on mountain conservation matters and our campaigning priorities.
- Joined a coalition of conservation organisations to call for a moratorium on the culling of mountain hares until measures are put in place to ensure their numbers remain at sustainable levels.
- Gave evidence to the Scottish Parliament regarding the new Planning Bill and took part in the 'Keep it Wild' gathering outside Holyrood to urge for stronger protection for Wild Land Areas.
- Responded to 35 consultations representing mountaineering interests on a variety of landscape matters, from new forestry plans, national nature reserve plans and local development plans, to applications for hill tracks, hydro schemes, hotel rebuilds, mines, masts, transmission power lines and pumped storage schemes.
- Successful outcomes to our objection to several major planning applications that would have had a negative impact on the mountain environment, including a 4x4 driving centre in the Pentlands and industrial-scale wind farm proposals in wild land areas like Caiplich and Culachy.

“Possibly the biggest single issue facing Mountaineering Scotland at present - piecemeal development and lack of control over access tracks and land management – is gradually eroding the special quality of some mountain areas.”

Member, conservation survey



Championing access

- Recruited a new full time Access & Conservation Officer to dedicate more time to addressing access and landscape matters affecting Scotland's mountains and influencing policy-makers.
- Launched the 'Mend our Mountains' fundraising appeal alongside the Outdoor Access Trust for Scotland to raise £100,000 for two urgent mountain path repair projects as part of a UK-wide campaign coordinated by the BMC.
- Dealt with over 100 enquiries from members and others on specific access issues, liaising with local authorities and National Park authorities to seek advice and resolution.
- Supported public petitions to protect Scotland's countryside management services in the face of cuts in public expenditure and for improvements in awareness, testing and treatment of Lyme disease among the public and medical profession.
- Continued to take a leading role in opposing the Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park's introduction of camping byelaws and scrutinised the implementation of the scheme.
- Worked together with raptor study groups, rangers, climbing interests and SNH to provide up to date information on crag and cliff nesting bird locations.
- Continued negotiations with the estates at Strathfarrar to maintain winter vehicle access for hillwalkers and climbers to the private road up the glen.
- Promoted responsible hill walking in relation to wild camping, footpath erosion, dogs, ground nesting birds and the stalking season.
- Worked closely with Forestry Commission Scotland to ensure proposed forestry plans take into account access opportunities and visual impact and car parks cater for overnight or multi-day access to the hills.
- Partner in the successful 'Have you got the bottle' campaign calling for a bottle deposit scheme to reduce plastic waste and littering in the mountains.

Get campaigning

Over 100 access queries or issues dealt with

35 responses to planning applications and consultations

4 public enquiries attended



ClimbScotland

- Worked with over 60 partners, including climbing walls, schools, colleges and youth groups, to help give more than 900 young people a taste of climbing – indoors or on rock – supporting their progression for recreation, competition and future careers.
- Organised the ClimbScotland Festival at EICA Ratho, attracting several hundred young people and their families to try climbing for the first time.
- Fantastic 37% rise in young climbers taking part in our competition climbing, from 1410 last year to 1935 in 2017-18. Bucking the trend in youth sports participation, with more girls (55%) than boys (45%) taking part!
- Supported the development and promotion of the Scottish Speed Development Squad at EICA Ratho.



Get climbing stats

1935 competitors in 22 climbing competition events

670 participants at 42 indoor climbing sessions

227 participants at 24 outdoor climbing sessions

197 members at climbing coaching and route-setting workshops

Nine young members have competed at an international level in youth climbing competitions this year

“

It was the best organised climbing event I have ever attended, fantastic facilities and lovely people

”

Parent of competitor at the Scottish Youth Bouldering Championship



Developing the sport of climbing

- Worked closely to support the Scottish Climbing Wall Network (SCWN) on a wide range of matters, including being involved in the opening of Eden Rock in Edinburgh – Scotland's new and biggest bouldering facility.
- Developed and piloted successful Route Setting workshops to help grow the quality of routes at climbing walls and competitions.
- Improved competitor satisfaction with our competitions and youth academies by bringing the organisation of them in-house.

“

Great course, lots of fun and learned a lot, I've recommended it to other members of our club. Keep it up.

”

Fundamentals course participant

Our thanks go to...

All members of the SCWN – especially those who host our events, Allcord, Association of Mountaineering Instructors, Big Lottery Fund, Mountain Training Scotland, NICAS/Association of British Climbing Training Trust, sportscotland, Pyschi, Tendon and Tiso

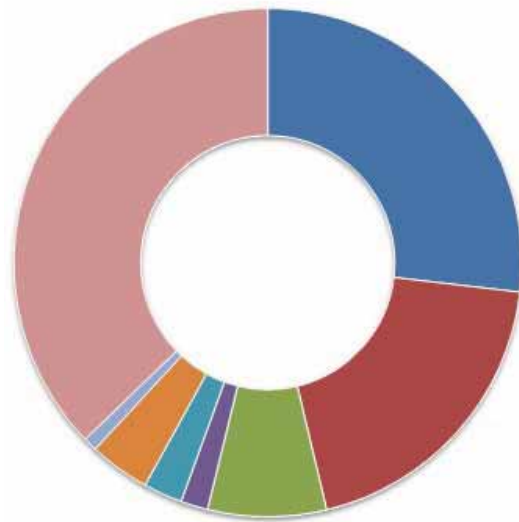
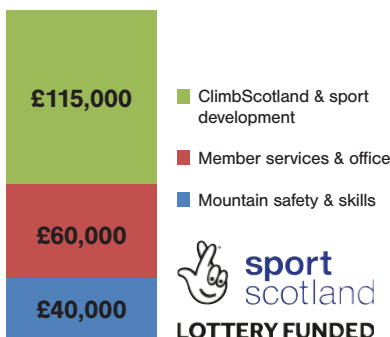
Improving our organisation

- Thanks to strong results in recruiting and retaining new members, plus a membership price rise in April 2017, our total income rose by 8% (£43,500) to £580,000.
- A rise in staff costs, including the introduction of auto enrolment pensions, led to a 3% increase in expenditure (£16,500) to £535,000.
- We achieved an end of year surplus of £42,000, compared with £14,500 in 2016-17. This has resulted in our reserves growing to £219,000, enabling us to invest in a full time Access & Conservation Officer and plan to refurbish our Granary office in Perth in 2018-19.
- We are succeeding in our aim to become less reliant on grant income. Our membership revenue has risen to almost 50% of total income compared with 43% in 2016-17. We continue to seek sustainable ways to diversify our income.

► Check out our full Treasurer's report and annual accounts at: www.mountaineering.scot/annual-report-accounts

sportscotland investment

- Sportscotland investment in the year to 31 March 2018 was £215,000, the same as the previous year. This is in line with our expectations and our investment application which has been approved for 2017 to 2021.
- Sportscotland investment is made on the basis of commitment to and delivery of a detailed action plan and strong corporate governance, with targets and activities connected to our Strategic Plan.

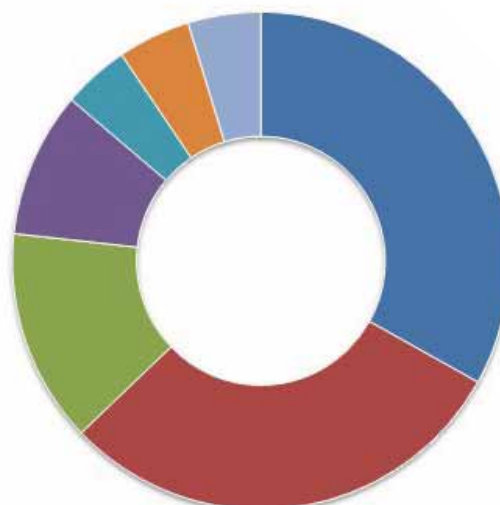
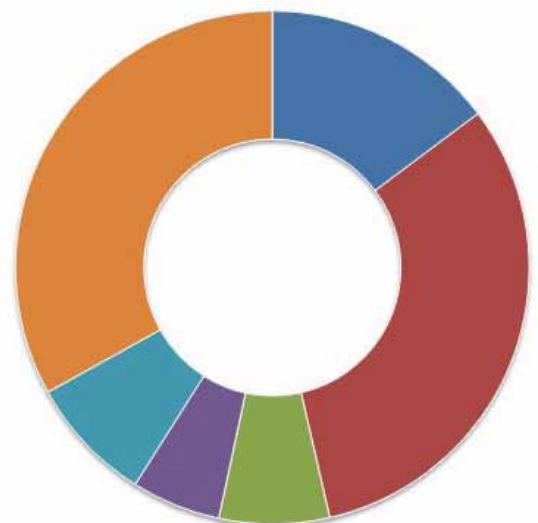


Income

- Individual memberships (£155k)
- Club & associate membership (£112k)
- Mountain safety & skills (£44k)
- Landscape & access grant (£10k)
- Sport development (£14k)
- Climbscotland incl competitions (£22k)
- Other (£5k)
- Sportscotland investment (£215k)

Expenditure

- Mountain safety & skills (£79k)
- Climbscotland incl competitions (£169k)
- Civil liability insurance (£37k)
- Sport development (£30k)
- Landscape & access (£43k)
- Office (£177k)



Allocation of subscriptions

- Landscape & access (33%)
- Other member services (30%)
- liability insurance (14%)
- Climbscotland (9%)
- Magazine (4%)
- Mountain safety & skills (5%)
- Sport development (5%)