

**Mountaineering Scotland**

**Climbing Wall Facilities**

**2016-2021**



**Mountaineering  
Scotland**

# **STRATEGY**



  
**climb  
SCOTLAND**

# CLIMBING WALLS POSITION STATEMENT: 2016 Facility Review & 2016-2021 Strategy

## Needs Analysis

The Position Statement outlined the style and scale of climbing wall provision. This Review of Current Facilities and a Needs Analysis have been undertaken in order to develop the strategy for regional networks based around the following facilities:

- Grass-roots: Play Parks
- Grass-roots: Primary School
- Grass-roots: High School
- Small Walls
- Regional Hubs (roped and boulder)
- Regional Boulder Parks
- National Centres
- Performance Centres
- International Centre

## Client Base

Total Population of Scotland: (2011) 5,295,403

Gender Split: Men (48.5%) / Women (51.5%)

Climbing Wall Usage: These have not all been available due to a lack of recording usage by most of the larger walls or a rolling figure from year to year. Some commercial walls felt this information was sensitive and were not able to supply it. We have been given figures for registered climbers and usage as follows:

Climbing Facilities in Scotland	Registered Climbers aged 7 - 13	Registered Climbers aged 14 - 24	Registered Climbers aged 25+	User Numbers / yr
Glasgow Climbing Centre	2,836	5,501	29,042	56,000
The Climbing Academy, Glasgow	560	2,387	7,750	55,000
EICA:, Ratho	838	2,089	9,248	265,000
Alien Rock, Edinburgh	2,675	3,602	2,040	65,000
Transition Extreme (estimate)				110,000
Avertical World, Dundee	500	494	1,500	-
THE PEAK, Stirling	184	213	621	-
Inverness Leisure Centre	1,063	1,343	4,432	12,000

Mountaineering Scotland Affiliated Climbing and Mountaineering Clubs: 7,476 (Youth: 244 / Student: 1,230)

## Sustainability

Past usage of walls can be estimated by taking average individual users' visits as between 2 and 3 per week. This figure depends on the location of the venue and facilities offered. The peak times for usage are evenings and weekends through the winter months Sept – March. When there are several venues available within traveling distance the preferred option is also often based around ease of geographical access, taking account of weather through the winter months.

Regular user visits to a local small wall will be made to a centre that is within 30min drive. For modern new-build Regional Hubs to thrive the critical mass of population is understood to be around 100,000 people living within 30-60mins drive of the proposed venue.

GENERAL POPULATION NUMBERS		PRIMARY SCHOOLS	HIGH SCHOOLS	SMALL WALLS	REGIONAL HUB
Glasgow	592,820	287	49		2
Edinburgh	486,120	152	40	3	1
Aberdeen	217,120	93	21	2	1
Falkirk	145,191	59	9		
Dundee	144,290	53	16	1	1
Stirling	89,850	55	9		
Inverness	56,660	5	13		1
Ayr	46,431	6	14		
Perth	43,450	9	5	2	
Aberdeen-shire	226,871	276	18	4	
Angus	108,400	68	9		
Argyll & Bute	91,306	99	11		
Clacks	48,007	24	4	1	
Dumfries Galloway	147,725	133	20		
East Ayrshire	120,235	56	11	1	
East Dumbarton	108,243	46	10		
East Lothian	90,088	40	8	1	
East Renfrew	89,311	25	8		
Eilean Siar	27,250			1	
Fife	349,429	180	23	2	
Highland	208,914	213	32	7	1
Inverclyde	84,203	43	12		
Midlothian	80,941	46	6		
Moray	86,940	57	12	4	
North Ayrshire	135,817	61	11		
North Lanarkshire	321,067	167	27		
Orkney	19,245	22	6	1	
Perth & Kinross	134,949	98	21	5	
Renfrewshire	172,867	65	16		
Scottish Borders	106,764	86	10		
Shetland	21,988	35	9	1	
South Ayrshire	112,097	50	10		
South Lanarkshire	302,216	138	26		
West Dumbarton	93,378	44	9		
West Lothian	158,714	76	11	1	National
Figures from the National Records of Scotland Census 2011					

**See Appendix for Full Lists of Clubs, Walls and Schools**



# FACILITY DESIGNATION STRATEGY

## Regional Hubs:

The Regional Hub is a critical component of climbing wall facility provision catering for larger populations and a greater range of activities which act as the main hub for a designated "Region". Level 3 Regional Hubs would be considered as 'National Hubs' catering for National competitions.

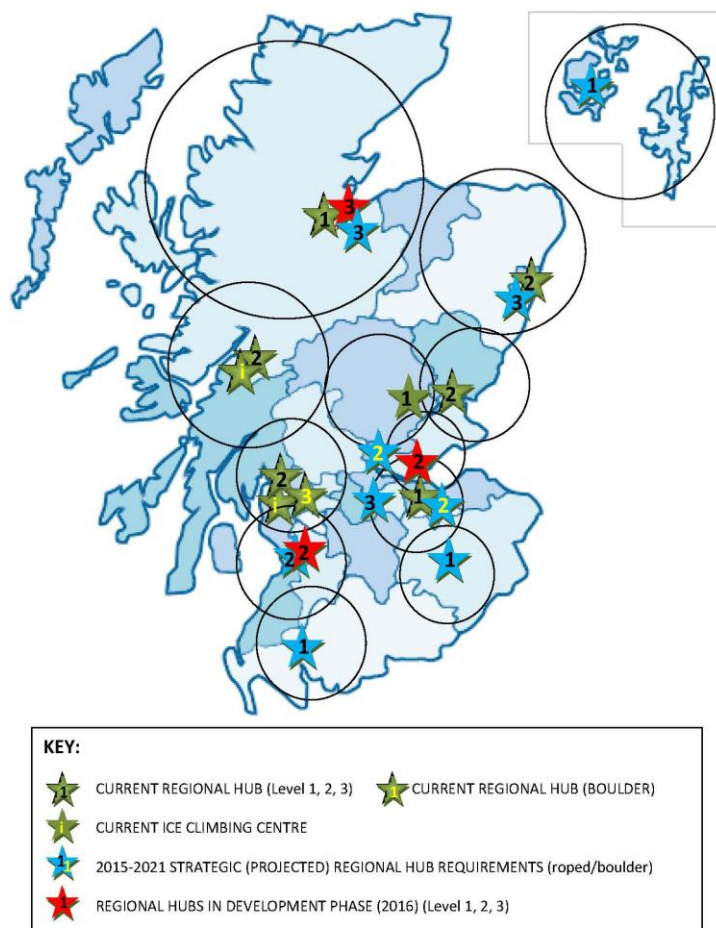
Hub endorsement indicates their ability to deliver different aspects of Mountaineering Scotland Sports Development Plan and acting as central hubs to other small and school walls.

12 Regions have been allocated on the basis of the Needs Analysis and are indicated by the circled areas in the map opposite.

Large scale dedicated bouldering only venues are a relatively recent development with the establishment of 'The Climbing Academy' in Glasgow. These can also be regarded as Regional Hubs and endorsed according to what is on offer.

## Climbing Facilities in Scotland

CURRENT and PROPOSED distribution of **Regional Hub** climbing facilities in Scotland  
(Assessment May 2016)



### ASSESSED REGIONAL HUBS:

**Level 1:** Inverness Leisure, Alien Rock Edinburgh, Perth and Kinross (UHI College 2016)

**Level 2:** Transition Extreme Aberdeen, The Ice Factor Kinlochleven, Glasgow Climbing Centre, Avertical World Dundee,

**Level 3 (National):** None, The Climbing Academy Glasgow (Boulder only), The Ice Factor, Kinlochleven (Ice Wall)

### REQUIRED UPGRADES:

**Level 1:** Orkney/Shetland

**Level 2:** Edinburgh

**Level 3:** Inverness, Aberdeen

### REQUIRED NEW HUBS:

**Level 1:** Dumfries & Galloway

**Level 2:** Kilmarnock, Fife, Edinburgh (Boulder only), Stirling/Central (Boulder only)

**Level 3: (National)** Inverness,

## Boulder Parks:

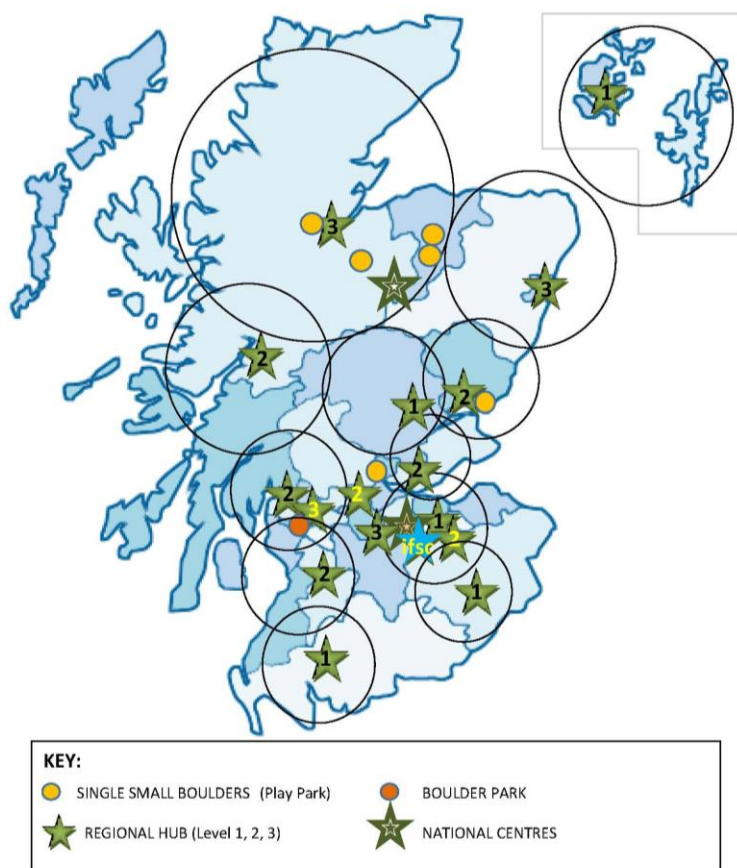
Current provision of artificial climbing walls as free facilities within town parks is extremely fragmented, all current facilities are far too small a scale to be regarded as significant and the design is inappropriate for the sport. Mountaineering Scotland will support the building of more suitable 'boulder parks' catering for novice, children and adult recreational climbers where most appropriate. There are areas of medium to large populations across Scotland, where outdoor bouldering is not available and the provision of bouldering for local dedicated climbers would be advantageous.

### Current Provision

The map on the right shows the current spread of outdoor boulders. For a list see the appendix.

## Climbing Facilities in Scotland

CURRENT distribution of **Boulders and Boulder Park** facilities in Scotland in relation to proposed Regional Hubs and National/International Centres (Assessment May 2016)



### Forward Strategy

For each region it would be desirable to see suitable small boulders at a range of children's play parks. Additionally, adult-suitable boulder parks should be established at suitable venues in each region.

#### PLAY PARK BOULDERS GAPS:

Peterhead, Elgin, Dingwall, Thurso, Greenock, Nairn, Cumbernauld, Dunbar, Isle of Arran,

#### BOULDER PARK GAPS

City based boulder park in each region including Dundee, Edinburgh (City Central), Perth, Ayr, Stirling, Inverness, Aberdeen, Dumfries, Hawick, Dunfermline, Glenrothes

## School Walls:

A database of existing walls at primary schools and high schools is maintained by Mountaineering Scotland and the numbers of walls are increasing. However, in order to establish the player pathways and competition networks detailed in the Strategic Plan, there remain gaps both in provision and in wall design and use. This will remain an area of priority.

### Primary Schools

Many older Traverse Walls are unused, un-maintained and no longer conform to requirements for the NIBAS Scheme nor are suitable for Pre-FUNDamental coaching. Indeed it appears that some are being closed-off due to Health and Safety fears and/or lack of maintenance. Mountaineering Scotland's focus is to maintain the current facilities in working order and open up those being closed, to upgrade to new useable walls where possible and establish more new-style walls wherever possible. Local Authority areas currently lacking in any facility, will be encouraged to begin facility development:

### Current Provision

The map shows the current spread of Primary School Traverse Walls. For a list see the appendix. Their status (closed or used) is currently unknown.

#### EXISTING OLD:

All existing traverse walls should be H&S and maintenance assessed and their status upgraded to 'Open'.

#### UPGRADES REQUIRED:

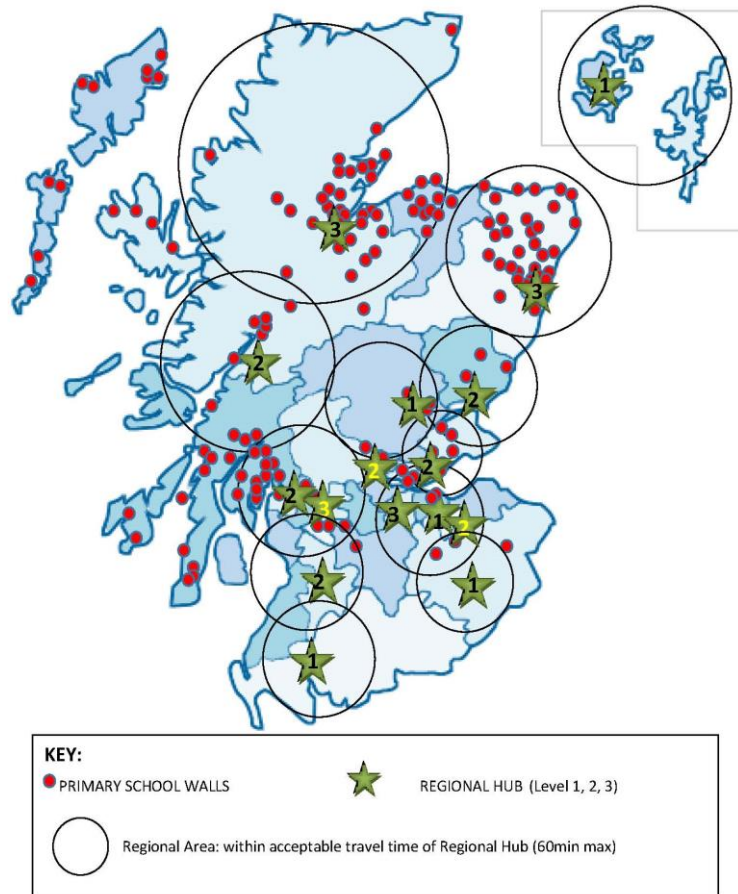
Some walls may require upgrading once their assessment is complete in which case upgrading to free-standing walls may be an option at larger schools

#### REGIONAL GAPS:

Dumfries & Galloway, Borders, Northern Highlands

## Climbing Facilities in Scotland

Current distribution of **Primary School Traverse Wall** climbing facilities in Scotland in relation to proposed Regional Hubs (Assessment May 2016)



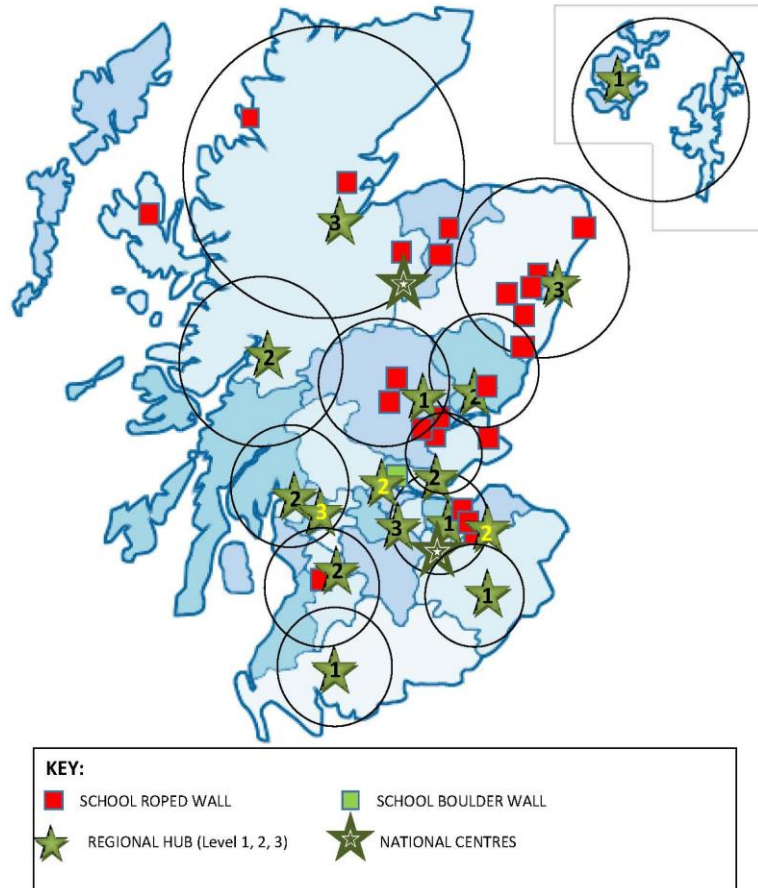
## High Schools

Few Local Authority Schools have suitable climbing wall facilities that can be used both for PE or the Curriculum for Excellence. Mountaineering Scotland will support the building of any new wall project at a school. The focus will be on new school proposals where facilities can be included in initial design. We will also help find suitable venues within established schools in areas that can be linked into a network.

School walls may not be open to the public, but where they are part of a community campus, public opening is an advantage and here they should be developed as Small Wall design and scale.

## Climbing Facilities in Scotland

CURRENT distribution of **High School Wall** climbing facilities in Scotland in relation to proposed Regional Hubs and the National Centres (Assessment May 2016)



**EXISTING OLD:** Alloa School Support (R), Perth High School (R&B), St Joseph's Academy Kilmarnock (R), Morrison's Academy (R&B)

**EXISTING NEW:** Aberlour High School (R), Breadalbane Academy Aberfeldy (R), Gairloch (R), Portree Isle of Skye (R), Perth Grammar School (R), Gordonstoun School (R), Loch Leven Community Campus (R), Banchory Academy Community Centre (R), Perth High School (R&B)

**REGIONAL GAPS:** Most of the following areas have large enough populations and school rolls to warrant a school wall facility: Borders Towns, Dumfries & Galloway Towns, Glasgow city schools, Highland Town schools around Inverness and the Black Isle

NB: (R) - Roped Wall; (B): Boulder wall



## Small Walls:

There are two aspects to small wall development, that of existing and that of new facilities. Some existing local facilities are old and are no longer meeting the needs of the local climbing community, are too small for current demand or are unsuitable for the pathway and would benefit from being up-graded.

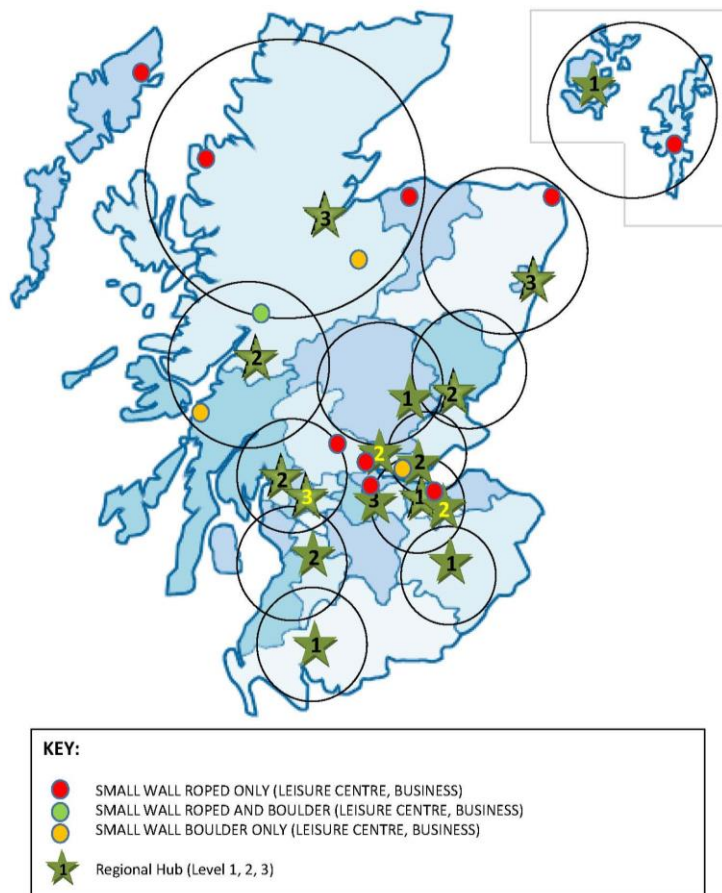
There are other areas where provision of a local facility would be advantageous as part of the network in a region. There should be at least one Small Wall provision in towns of more than 40,000 population and Regional Areas catering for a population within traveling distance of 30 minutes.

### Current Provision

The map shows the current spread of Small Walls. For a list see the appendix. Their status (closed or used,) if known is shown below.

## Climbing Facilities in Scotland

CURRENT distribution of **Small Wall** climbing facilities in Scotland in relation to proposed Regional Hubs (Assessment May 2016)



### EXISTING OLD:

McLaren Leisure Centre Callander (R), Dingwall Leisure Centre (R), Meadowbank (R), Low Port Centre Linlithgow (R), Lewis Sports Centre Stornoway (R), Peterhead Leisure Centre (R), Abernethy Trust Ardgour (R), Abernethy Trust Nethybridge (B), Ullapool Leisure centre (R)

### EXISTING NEW:

Carnegie Leisure Centre Dunfermline (B), Craig MacLean Leisure Centre Granttown on Spey (R: currently closed), Gairloch (R), Atlantis Leisure Centre Oban (B), Peak Wall Stirling (R), Pickaquoy Orkney (R&B), Clickimin Leisure Centre Shetland (R: currently closed), Brae Head Glasgow (R), Forester Park Tranent (R), RGU Aberdeen (R&B), CSE Edinburgh University (R&B)

### UPGRADE REQUIRED:

Ullapool Leisure centre (R: upgrade 2016), Pickaquoy Orkney (R&B: to Regional Hub), Oban (B: very small and poorly sited)

### REGIONAL GAPS:

There are clear gaps across all regions outside Edinburgh & Stirling, particularly the Borders, Dumfries & Galloway, Highlands, Aberdeenshire Angus and Perth and Kinross. Town Leisure centres in these areas may be able to accommodate a facility as space or upgrades become available.

NB: (R) - Roped Wall; (B): Boulder wall



# Performance & International Centres:

## Performance Centres:

The designation of a centre with specific requirements for developing physical performance both at elite recreational and competitive levels is a new concept.

The recent development of the Coaching Climbing Awards with the Level 3 Performance Award to be finalised early within the period of this plan, requires Mountaineering Scotland to encourage the development of science based performance that will meet the needs of Scottish and GB Squads.

These centres would best be located at Regional Hubs that can cater for the additional requirements.

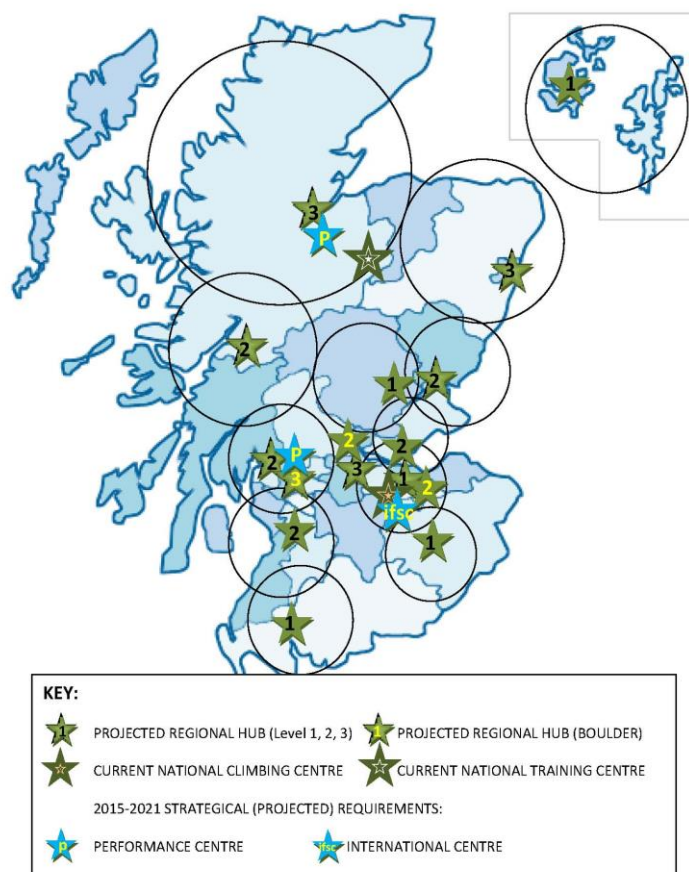
With two Scottish competition Teams (North and South) it is envisaged that each would have a dedicated Performance Centre.

### NATIONAL GAPS:

- North Scotland
- South Scotland

## Climbing Facilities in Scotland

CURRENT and PROPOSED distribution of **Performance and International** climbing facilities in Scotland in relation to proposed Regional Hubs and the National/International Climbing Centre (Assessment May 2016)



## International Climbing Centre:

The development of Edinburgh International Climbing Arena at Ratho Quarry (EICA: Ratho), incorporating the National Indoor Rock Climbing Centre was established with full support from Mountaineering Scotland as the National Centre. Since then its status as an International Competition Centre has grown with IFSC competitions in Lead and Speed being held regularly. However, there is a lack of suitable bouldering walls to cater for IFSC bouldering competitions. Mountaineering Scotland will target development of the National Centre to cater for this.

**EXISTING:** EICA: Ratho

**UPGRADE:** EICA: Ratho (IFSC standard competition bouldering wall)

## National Training Centre

This development has been established with full support from sportscotland at Glenmore Lodge. Mountaineering Scotland will continue to be involved in the development of the National Centre into the future.

**EXISTING:** Glenmore Lodge

**UPGRADE:** Glenmore Lodge (larger indoor wall / dedicated dry-tooling wall)

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