



**Mountaineering
Scotland**



Scottish Natural Heritage
Dualchas Nàdair na h-Alba
All of nature for all of Scotland
Nàdar air fad airson Alba air fad

Press Release

3 August 2017

For immediate release

Stalking and walking

Website aims to avoid conflict between hill walkers and shooting estates in the Highlands

As Scotland's deer stalking season gets into full swing, a web-based service to avoid conflict between walkers and stalkers has been relaunched.

Scottish Natural Heritage's 'Heading for the Scottish Hills' website allows walkers to check ahead for details of possible deer stalking taking place on estates where they plan to go walking. As in previous years, it's hoped this will reduce the chance of disturbing stag stalking during the peak season from late summer to 20th October.

This year Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) has worked with partners including Mountaineering Scotland and the Association of Deer Management Groups to create a more user-friendly service, which has expanded again this year, particularly in the north-west Highlands, and is accessible from mobiles and tablets.

The website (www.outdooraccess-scotland.com/hftsh) includes general information about stalking on all participating estates and contact details for further information. There is also information about responsible behaviour for both land managers and walkers.

The site provides information on specific Munros, Corbetts and other popular hills. It also includes routes that are "always okay" and general information such as when the estate will start stag stalking and the days of the week when stalking doesn't take place.

Fiona Cuninghame, SNH recreation and access officer, said: "The web service is a quick way to check that you won't disturb deer stalking when heading to participating hills between July and October. We hope that you find the service easy to use and would welcome feedback by email to HFTSH@snh.gov.uk. We expect the service to continue to grow, so if the hills you want to climb aren't included on the site, it's worth taking another look before you head out."

James Orpwood, Mountaineering Scotland's Access Officer, said: "Mountaineering Scotland has been closely involved with the Heading for the Scottish Hills website and is delighted to see it has expanded again this year. We encourage all hill-goers to check the website during the stalking season and contact the relevant estate if necessary."

The website helps walkers follow the advice in the Scottish Outdoor Access Code to try and find out where stag stalking is taking place and who to contact if more information is required. The Code also encourages walkers to take account of reasonable advice on alternative routes and to avoid crossing land where stalking is taking place.

Richard Cooke, Chairman of the Association of Deer Management Groups, said: “The Association of Deer Management Groups has been involved with Heading for the Scottish Hills for more than 20 years, both in its initial book form and now in the online version.

“We would like to see this resource as the ‘go to’ source of information for people taking recreational access in the Highlands of Scotland and are pleased that an increasing number of Deer Management Groups are signing up. Clearly it is in our members’ interests also to make this information available.”

Ends

Notes for editors:

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About Mountaineering Scotland:

- Mountaineering Scotland is the only recognised representative organisation for hill walkers, climbers and ski-tourers who live in Scotland or who enjoy Scotland’s mountains.
- Mountaineering Scotland provides training and information to mountain users to promote safety, self-reliance and the enjoyment of our mountain environment.
- The Mountaineering Scotland is a membership organisation with over 14,000 members representing hill walkers, climbers and mountaineers, funded through a combination of membership subscriptions, non-governmental grants and investment from sportscotland, which supports public initiatives and services in mountain safety, mountain training and the development and promotion of mountaineering activities.
- Mountaineering Scotland also acts for 75,000 members of the BMC or British Mountaineering Council on matters related to Landscape and Access in Scotland.
- Mountaineering Scotland landscape and access work is supported financially by the Scottish Mountaineering Trust and the BMC
- Mountaineering Scotland has launched the ClimbScotland initiative to encourage young people to participate in climbing and support their progression. It offers a dedicated website and a development team, which will introduce young people to climbing at schools, climbing walls and via youth organisations with a range of activities and events, while developing kids clubs and providing specialist support to parents, volunteers and teachers.

- Mountaineering Scotland is the national governing body for sports climbing. It offers pathways to climbing coaching, organises and promotes a range of regional and national climbing competitions, and manages the Scottish climbing and bouldering teams. It contributes to the management of the GB teams with the ultimate aim of seeing a Scottish athlete achieve a podium position in the Olympic Games.
- Mountaineering Scotland is the new name for the Mountaineering Council of Scotland (MCofS), which acts to represent, support and promote Scottish mountaineering.
- Mountaineering Council of Scotland remains the registered company name.
- The MCofS is a not for profit company limited by guarantee and incorporated in Scotland. Company number SC322717.
- Mountaineering Scotland, The Granary, West Mill Street, Perth PH1 5QP

Scottish Natural Heritage is the government's adviser on all aspects of nature and landscape across Scotland. Our role is to help everyone understand, value and enjoy Scotland's nature now and in the future. For more information, visit our website at www.snh.gov.uk. SNH media is also now on Twitter at http://twitter.com/SNH_Tweets