



Press Release

23 October 2019

For immediate release

Get ready for the snow

Walkers reminded to prepare for winter in the mountains

Some of the first snows of winter are expected this weekend. It may still only be October, but hill walkers have been warned they should be prepared for winter conditions.

And with the days shortening and clocks going back an hour this weekend, darkness will be coming a lot sooner, making a headtorch an essential piece of kit.

“Short days and severe weather put greater demands on your equipment and your own ability and hillcraft,” said Mountaineering Scotland Mountain Safety Adviser Heather Morning.

“Now is the time to ‘winterise’ your rucksack – make sure you’re properly prepared for winter weather and have all the necessary equipment as well as adequate clothing.

“Planning for your route takes on extra importance too. You need to factor in the reduced daylight hours and that weather and ground conditions could slow you down considerably, so it’s best not to be overambitious at the start of the season.”

From 14 December, the sportscotland Avalanche Information Service (SAIS) at www.sais.gov.uk will again provide free daily reports on snow conditions and avalanche forecasts for six mountain areas of Scotland.

General hill walking and winter mountaineering advice is also available through the Mountaineering Scotland website at www.mountaineering.scot and, in partnership with Tiso, Cotswold and Craigdon stores, the organisation is running a winter safety lecture tour. Check out www.mountaineering.scot/safety-and-skills/courses-and-events/winter-safety-lectures for dates and venues.

Damon Powell, chair of Scottish Mountain Rescue, said: “We fully endorse the Mountaineering Scotland winter safety message and would encourage hillgoers to ensure that they have left details of their intended route and expected return time.

“At this time of year Mountain Rescue teams are repacking the equipment needed for the shorter daylight hours, colder days and the approaching wintry weather. More warm clothing, winter grade

waterproofs, thicker and more pairs of gloves, warmer hats, goggles, larger torches with sufficient battery to get through a night. Axe, crampons, avalanche transceiver, probe and shovel will all be dusted off and checked ready for when needed. These days a range of navigational tools will ALL be carried to assist on dark nights: map and compass, GPS and smart phones with OS Locate or a mapping app, all weather proofed and tested to work in very wet and cold conditions and with enough spare batteries.

“Remember Mountain Rescue in Scotland is provided free by world class volunteers on call at all times and in all weathers. If you require assistance on the hills, dial 999 ask for Police then Mountain Rescue.”

Ends

Notes for editors:

Image: Night-time on Beinn Alligin, by Zak Mooney.

<http://www.mountaineering.scot/assets/contentfiles/media-upload/220436563.jpg>

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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.
- 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 youth squads and team. 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.

- The MCoS is a not for profit company limited by guarantee and incorporated in Scotland. Company number SC322717.
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