



Press Release

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For immediate release

Loretto pupils step out for path repairs

School supports appeal to restore mountain footpaths

Pupils from Loretto School in East Lothian will be donning their boots next week to raise funds for a nationwide appeal to look after the country's mountains.

Senior pupils from the school will head for Beinn A' Ghlo in the southern Cairngorms, while younger pupils will head for the Eildon Hills in the Borders, and pupils from the primary school will take part in a Geoconservation walk on Arthur's Seat in Edinburgh.

It's all in aid of the 'Mend Our Mountains' appeal, which seeks to raise £1 million across the UK, with a target in Scotland of £100,000.

The appeal is run by the British Mountaineering Council overall, and led by Mountaineering Scotland north of the border.

Money raised will go to help restore badly eroded footpaths on some of our most iconic and popular mountains in National Parks.

In Scotland's two National Parks – the Cairngorms and Loch Lomond & The Trossachs – the mountain paths chosen are Beinn A' Ghlo in the Cairngorms and Ben Vane.

Both get many thousands of ascents every year but suffer from badly eroded paths which not only make life harder for hill walkers but also cause growing damage to the hillsides.

Loretto School has a strong tradition in hill walking and wilderness activities, including recent expeditions for senior students to wilderness regions of Norway, Iceland and Greenland. An ascent of Beinn A' Ghlo was already being planned when teachers learned of the Mend Our Mountains appeal.

Head of Sixth Form Dr Richard Phillips said: "I had been reading an article in an old mountaineering journal from 1893, written by one of our former Headmasters, Hely Hutchinson-Almond, who climbed the Beinn A' Ghlo massif on Christmas day in 1892.

"Hutchinson-Almond was a pivotal figure at Loretto as he defined its ethos, now summarised as 'mind, body and spirit'. He was ahead of his time in recognising that the outdoors were central to positive mental and physical health and his emphasis was on access and enjoyment of the outdoors for all.

"Having read his 1893 article I was keen to take some students to retrace the route on Beinn A' Ghlo but when I read about Mend Our Mountains through Mountaineering Scotland, I decided to get our students involved in some fund raising events, including a walk up Beinn A' Ghlo."

As well as the younger pupils' trips to the Eildon Hills and Arthur's Seat, the whole school will be getting into the spirit with a 'Mend Our Mountains' cake and bake sale in the school, with the likes of Rock Cakes and Munro Muffins likely to be among the favourites.

And through the week senior pupils will also be taking part in a sponsored abseil down the Fife coastal cliffs at Hawcraig Point, Aberdour.

Founded in 1827, Loretto School is one of Britain's leading co-educational boarding and day schools for girls and boys aged 0-18. The School is set in 85 acres of leafy campus just outside Edinburgh, and is well known for its emphasis on the development of the whole person, mind, body and spirit.

More information about the Mend Our Mountains appeal and information on how to donate can be found at www.mountaineering.scot/mend-our-mountains

Ends

Notes for editors:

Image: Pupils from Loretto School on a mountaineering trip to Northern Norway in 2015.

<http://www.mountaineering.scot/assets/contentfiles/media-upload/NorthernNorway2015a.JPG>

The programme of events through the week is:

September 2nd: ascent of the Beinn a'Ghlo massif (Senior School)

September 4th and 6th: charity abseil at Hawcraig sea cliffs (Senior School)

September 7th: Charity Bake sale (whole school)

September 7th: Geoconservation walk and ascent of Arthur's Seat (Junior School)

September 9th: ascent of the Eildon Hills (Senior School)

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