

Forfar & District Hill Walking Club – Information Sheet

General

Forfar & District Hill Walking Club was formed in 1963 to "encourage public interest in hill walking", and has thrived since these early days, gaining a reputation as a friendly family club. Members come from most parts of Angus, with a few from further afield. The current membership is around 80 and consists of members of all ages. A membership list is distributed (if you do not want your address and phone number given out, please inform the secretary). The club has a written constitution and is run by a committee of 8 members elected at the Annual General Meeting. The AGM is in March and subscriptions are then due for the next year (currently £20 per annum)

Regular (indoor) Meetings

Regular monthly business meetings are held usually on the first Monday of each month at 7.30pm, (except July and August). The current venue for the meetings is at Queens Street Tavern, Forfar. During the winter months, a programme of talks/slide shows is arranged and these take place after the business meetings. Anyone wishing to attend the meetings will be made most welcome.

Meets

Meets are set by the club committee, after members have had a chance to offer suggestions. They are normally set for a period of 12 months in advance, running from July to June and are published in the form of a small coloured card called the "meet calendar", [also available on this web site](#). There are two types of meet - the day meet (there and back on the same day) and the weekend meet, usually two days walking on Saturday and Sunday. Typically there is one day meet per month and 4 or 5 weekend meets a year.

Day meets are mostly by bus. Some day meets are through walks, where the start and end points are miles apart (e.g. the Lairig Ghru). The bus always leaves from the Myre car park in Forfar at the time specified on the meet calendar. You are asked to phone the Meet Secretary (or if unavailable, the Assistant Meet Secretary) on the Friday evening prior to the day meet. The Meet Secretary needs to know how many are coming - if there are only a few people the bus will be cancelled and cars used (a common passenger fare will be decided before leaving the Myre car park).

On arriving at the bus, put your rucksack in the boot and grab a seat. On the outward journey, the Meet Secretary (or Assistant Meet Secretary) will pass round a map of the destination area and a list of proposed routes for that day. We mainly climb one or more hills in a day but the Meet Secretary will endeavour to offer a variety of walks of several grades according to duration and difficulty. There may be a low-level walk offered. You are asked to write your name under the walk that you are interested in. Non members are asked to write their name and address and a contact telephone number as well, just in case of an accident on the hill.

On the return journey, the Meet Secretary will collect the fares. The bus is subsidised from club funds and the fare is presently £12.00 for adults and £6.00 for juniors. On the return journey the bus usually makes a brief refreshment stop near a chip shop and/or pub. Please bring spare clothes with you and always leave a dry set of clothing on the bus. Remember to bring something warm for the return journey, as you tend to be tired and easily chilled after a long walk.

Arrangements for weekend meets are discussed at club meetings. In the last few years all weekend meets are usually to places with bunkhouse type accommodation with dormitories and self-catering facilities. Some members prefer bed and breakfast nearby. We travel out on Friday evening and return on Sunday evening. For those travelling to join up with a weekend meet on a Saturday or Sunday, contact the Meet Secretary for the morning departure times/places (normally 9am).

Essential equipment includes:-

- A good strong pair of boots
- A rucksack with a plastic liner to help keep things dry in bad weather

- Waterproof cagoule and overtrousers
- Warm clothing including hat and gloves (even if it is warm in the glens)
- Food for the day, and some spare for emergencies, and hot and cold drinks
- Map and compass
- A small personal first aid kit
- A large plastic bag large enough to crawl into is recommended
- If a camera is carried, put it into a plastic bag
- Spare clothing in a plastic bag, as well as a change of clothing left on the bus (or car)

Winter walking essentials include ice axe and crampons - check you have suitable boots, that the crampons fit and all screws are tight The skills needed to use these items are also essential

Outdoor Equipment Discounts

Blacks and Tiso in Dundee have annual discount evenings. The secretary will inform members of the dates. A club discount is available at all times from Outdoor Action, Arbroath.

Navigational Skills

The club's motto of "Far i wi noo" suggests a need for some navigational skills. Navigation is achieved by the use of a compass and Ordnance Survey maps (eg 1:50 000 Landranger Series). Although many walking days are fine and a route can be followed without resorting to a map and compass, navigation is essential when low cloud covers the hills or when caught out in nasty rain or snow showers. There are many good navigators in the club but it is mandatory that everyone understands the use of map and compass. There are occasional events held by the club to offer informal training in navigational skills.

Winter Skills

Winter walking demands other skills. Snow on the hills makes them more beautiful but also more dangerous. Ice axes are carried by club members, mainly to stop themselves in case of a fall on snow or ice. The club will endeavour to teach the skills. The Mountaineering Council of Scotland run weekend training courses at Glenmore Lodge for affiliated clubs. Over the past 15 years many club members have taken this opportunity to obtain professional instruction. Please let the Secretary know if you would be interested in winter training so you will be sent details and an application form when these are received in October. Places are allocated on a first come basis. You are not committed till you post a cheque to Glenmore Lodge! Free Winter Skills booklets are available from the Secretary. We also have a video tape.

Weather

As most of us are well aware, weather conditions in Scotland can change rapidly and even during the summer months high winds, sleet, snow etc. can be experienced, hence the insistence in ensuring that good waterproofs and warm clothing are carried at all times. Winter expeditions in Scotland can be very challenging and you should be prepared for extreme weather. Obviously we would not normally set out in extreme conditions into a potentially hazardous situation but it has to be borne in mind that such situations can arise and it is then vital both to yourself and the members of your party that your equipment and skills level are up to standard. There are good mountain weather forecasts on Radio Scotland at 6.55 pm Monday to Friday and at 7.3 am. on Saturday. The shipping forecast at 6am and 12 midnight is also useful. There are also phone forecasts on Mountaincall East 0891 500 442, Mountaincall West 0891 500 441, Climblines East 0891 654 668, Climblines West 0891 654 669. The Police Avalanche Information Line is 01463 713 191. If you have any doubts as to the type of outing, call the Meet Secretary or his assistant!

Davy's Bourach

The club is responsible for the upkeep of a well known local landmark - Davy's Bourach on Jock's Road in Glen Doll. This was built by Davy Glen in 1966. The club carried out major repairs in 1984 and again in 1987, when it was totally re-roofed using material carried up by helicopter, and again in 2001.

Ben Vuirich Trig Point

The Club has adopted and does any necessary maintenance on the Trig Point on Ben Vuirich, a few miles from Pitlochry.

Other Club Events and Traditions

Informal walks take place after Christmas and after New Year to work off some of the excess calories. We have an annual High Tea after a short winter walk in one of the Angus glens, usually followed by the Gird Race. Junior members are presented with a copy of Munros Tables after completing their First Fifty Munros. Members completing all the Munros will be presented with the Club scroll, to which their name will be added. They will keep it until there is another Munroist. We will endeavour to accommodate those who wish to do their Final Summit on a Club meet - this generally involves bag pipes, cloutie dumpling and "liquid refreshments". The Club also usually puts a running team into the Clova Half Marathon and into the Mountain Mind quiz and tries to put an entry into the photographic competition at the annual Dundee Mountain Film Festival.

Insurance

Part of your subscription goes to the Mountaineering Council of Scotland, who have arranged Public Liability Insurance for named members of affiliated clubs

Mountain Accidents

The Mountain Rescue Committee for Scotland has published a report on Scottish Mountain Rescues from 1964 to 1993. The main conclusions were:

- Most casualties had adequate clothing, but only 76% carried an ice-axe and 59% crampons. It seems that many who did have an ice-axe were not proficient in its use.
- A simple slip or stumble was the contributory cause of 42% of incidents and 53% of fatalities, whilst avalanches contributed to 15% of casualties and 13% of fatalities.
- 50% of all casualties (including walkers) who sustained fatal head injuries were not wearing a helmet.
- Poor navigation was a factor in 14% of all casualties and 24% of fatalities. Companions were often unable to give accurate locations of the injured.

Aggravated Trespass

This is now a criminal offence. The Government and the Scottish Landowners Federation have said this will not be used against hillwalkers but the Mountaineering Council of Scotland wish to know of any incidents in which the law is mentioned during an access problem and will give legal support to members.

Affiliated Bodies

The Club is affiliated to the following bodies, some of which newer members may be unfamiliar with. The secretary has newsletters etc. from these organisations:

[Mountaineering Council of Scotland \(MC of S \)](#)

As well as insurance and organising subsidised winter training, MC of S provides much valuable information to club secretaries and are actively involved in the access debate. Together with the

Scottish Landowners' Federation, they have produced a book called "Heading for the Scottish Hills" which gives the contacts for the Estates so that visitors can check that they are not going to disturb stalking, shooting etc. The secretary has copies of a 2 page update produced in 1995.

The Scottish Rights of Way Society

The objects of the SRWS are : 1. "The preservation, defence and acquisition of public rights of way in Scotland". 2 "The preservation and restoration of such rights of way as may be in danger of being lost".

Boots Across Scotland

"Boots" is a trust fund, which was set up by friends of a climber seriously injured in a climbing accident. The fundraising was so successful that the idea has been kept going to support other hillgoers in the future. Boots supports mountain rescue teams, promotes a greater awareness of mountain safety and offers support to those injured on the hills when recovering from injury. Much of their money is raised during the Boots Event when they aim to have walkers on every Munro. This is held every 4 years. The club have been on the following hills for this event :- 1992 - Meal nan Eun. 1996 - Beinn a` Ghlo 2000 - Slioch

John Muir Trust

The John Muir Trust is committed to practical action to preserve Britain's remaining wild places for their own sake, for the wildlife that depends on them, for the benefit of the local communities and for the enjoyment of future generations. It has bought many areas of wild land - In Knoydart, in Skye, in Northwest Sutherland, Schiehallion and Ben Nevis.

Tayside Mountain Rescue Association

Tayside Mountain Rescue Team are aiming to build up a pool of volunteer casualties in order to make their exercises more realistic. Training on how to react for certain injuries and/or illness will be given. Volunteers should be reasonably capable of looking after themselves. i.e. be a good navigator and be prepared to bivvy out. At the moment, this scheme is for summer and autumn exercises only. Anyone interested contact John Norrie (01241-876270) or Alf Ingram (01382-668193). Anyone interested in becoming a member of the Rescue Team (male or female) should also contact Alfie. Several Club members are members of the rescue team. There is a sponsored walk held annually to raise funds for the TMRA.

Club Clothing

A selection of T shirts, sweat shirts and polo shirts is available. Prices to be advised. The Club logo is available in the left hand chest pocket area and the motto can be printed on the back. There is a catalogue showing the variety of colours and styles. Cloth and metal badges are also available. Contact the Treasurer.

Communication Technology and Mountaineering

Copies of a paper produced by MC of S about mobile phones and the Global Positioning System are available from the Secretary. Their conclusion was that "these aids may be useful supplementary tools, especially for those leading and training groups, provided that those who carry them are fully competent in their use. They will not act as a substitute for acquiring the basic skills of mountain navigation and judgement."

Press Reports

The club has a representative who inserts information on club meets and other affairs in the local press. Reports appear in the Forfar Dispatch, Kirriemuir Herald, Brechin Advertiser, Arbroath Herald and Carnoustie Guide & Gazette.

Membership Fee

£22 per annum.

Finally

If you are not already a member and you feel that you may like to join the club or come out on a walk, then get in touch with the meet secretary. See [Committee](#). If you are under 16 then written permission from your parent/ guardian will be necessary. If you please you want to join print off (or save) the [application form](#) and send it to the secretary. See [Committee](#). You will have to phone for an address. Note that the form must be signed.