

WEST BROMWICH MOUNTAINEERING CLUB



**MARCH/APRIL 2026
NEWSLETTER**

CONTENTS

News p.2

Regular meets and special events pp.3-5

AGM p.6

March coach meet: Clwydian Range..... p.7

April coach meet: Keswick p.8

May coach meet: Ogwen p.9

Committee matters incl. hut secretary notice pp.10-12

Club trips and member articles pp.13-17

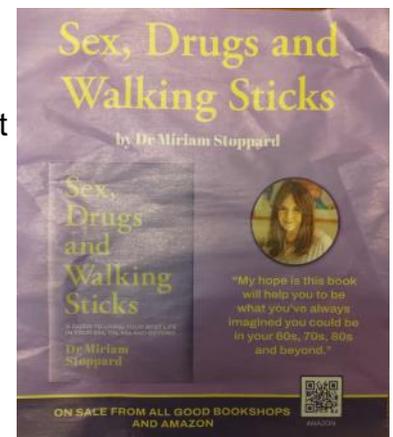
NEWS

Club news:

- ⇒ The AGM is coming up, check out p6 for details and please try to attend and help shape the club.
- ⇒ There are plenty of upcoming events to get in the diary, check out p4-5 and please get in contact if you can help running anything!
- ⇒ Nigel has suggested the advert on the right may be of interest to some of the club. Can't imagine why!

World news:

- ⇒ An Austrian court convicted a 37-year-old amateur mountaineer of gross negligent manslaughter after he left his girlfriend alone on Grossglockner where she died of hypothermia. He received a five-month suspended sentence and a fine, and both sides are appealing. A divisive issue of blame - but she was found with an emergency shelter still in her rucksack and he had put his phone on silent after declining help from mountain rescuers and heading home.
- ⇒ Nepal has now passed legislation that aspiring Everest climbers must have summited a 7000m Nepalese peak first. Sensible choice to reduce overcrowding or money grab?
- ⇒ Streetmap.co.uk is seeking donations to keep OS maps open access online.



Climbing, hill walking and mountaineering can provide life-long physical, social and mental health benefits through exercise and adventure in amazing environments. The BMC recognises these activities involve a risk of personal injury or death. Participants should be aware of and accept these risks and be responsible for their own actions and involvement.

Have your say/Get involved

Volunteer roles:

The club needs more involvement from members for events to be successful. Get in touch via committee@wbmc.org if you are interested in:

- Leading walks on coach meets
- Planning and leading evening outdoor meets
- Organising scrambling weekends
- Anything else that might be fun!

Coach meet destinations:

The committee invite suggestions for new future coach meet destinations. The meet card for 2026 is set with some regular destinations but if you have ideas for new places to try please write in. Please consider that a drop off and pick up will have to be “coach-friendly”, if you’re not sure why not have a chat with Nigel on the next coach.

Newsletter:

If you want to see your adventure, past or planned, in the next newsletter, contact Sophie on sophsky@gmail.com or WhatsApp 07980510356. Please send max. 5 photos and some text to

REGULAR MEETS AND FUTURE EVENTS

REGULAR MEETS

Coach Meets:

Sunday 8th March - Clwydian Range

Sunday 12th April - Keswick

Sunday 10th May - Ogwen

Coaches leave West Brom at 7am to give 5-7 hours on the hills. Multiple stops mean linear walks are often possible. If you don't fancy a long walk, how about a social day in beautiful surroundings, ending in the pub?

Reserve your seat with Nigel Tarr (07703 345729) or book on www.wbmc.org as early as possible. You will be guaranteed a great day on the hills or an amble through beautiful villages, with a chance to win a bottle of wine in a free coach raffle. You can now pay for the coach meet by card on the coach!

Fares: Members £25, Non members £25, Under 18's & Full time students £10

[To book your seat contact Nigel Tarr on 07703 345729 or book on the website.](#)

Cancellations after the Wednesday prior to the coach meet will still be charged £10 and failure to turn up without cancelling means the full coach fare will still be expected from you. This includes if you have said “yes” to Nigel on the previous meet!

Evening indoor winter presentations:

All held at the Red Lion, All Saints Way, B71 1RH

Thursday 5th March

Tony Emms will be taking us on an adventure through Patagonia.

Thursday 9th April

TBC

Evening outdoor social walks:

Thursday 7th May

TBC

Committee meetings/social nights at the Red Lion:

Thursday 12th March, 16th April, 14th May

Committee meetings start at 7.30pm Members are invited to listen in as observers - pop along to 190 All Saints Way, B71 1RH for the start, or does as some others do and arrive a bit earlier to eat there. Otherwise come along at ~ 8.30 pm for a drink & a chat (or meal) as you can guarantee others will be there.

Indoor climbing:

High Places, Kidderminster:

Members climb at High Places, Wyre Forest Leisure Centre, Siverwoods Way, Kidderminster DY11 7DT weekly on Tuesday afternoons/evenings. If you want to be added to the WhatsApp group for these meets or want more information, please feel free to get in touch with Pete Poultney 07779 366905 or peterpoultney@hotmail.co.uk.

Also see <https://www.placesleisure.org/centres/wyre-forest-leisure-centre/centre-activities/climbing/> for more details.

Redpoint, Birmingham:

Members climb at Redpoint Climbing & Bouldering Centre, 77 Cecil Street, Newtown, Birmingham B19 3ST at 10:30am on Thursdays. If you want to be added to the WhatsApp group for these meets or want more information, please feel free to get in touch with Darren Groutage 07973 405348 or wbmc.dg@outlook.com.

A new regular time slot of Monday 6pm has just been added to the calendar! Contact Darren Beards or Sophie Kellaway to be kept in the loop for this.

Also see <http://www.redpointbirmingham.co.uk/> for more details.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Annual Away Dinner:

Arriving Friday, 20th to 22nd March, Aysgarth Falls Hotel (Yorkshire).

There are still a few last minute spaces available for this!

Bookings, queries or expressions of interest to Sarah Wheatcroft please via s.e.wheatcroft@googlemail.com or on 07398365990. To see the venue check out aysgarthfallshotel.com.

Scrambling/hut weekends:

27th-29th March, Club Hut (Wales)

Tony Emms will be leading a small group on a challenging scrambling route - please discuss with him directly to join this (07793 008582 membership-secretary@wbmc.org). Other members are welcome to join the weekend to self-organise walking, climbing and scrambling trips, based out of the club hut.

17th-19th April, Coniston Holly How YHA (Lake District)

This meet will be based out of the YHA and is on a self book basis. If you are keen to join the meet, to scramble and/or climb, then please book in the hostel ASAP, and let Tony Emms, Meet Steward, know you have booked on. Currently, they have 7 males and 7 female beds available at £32.50 per night, room only. <https://www.yha.org.uk/hostel/yha-coniston-holly-how>

5th-7th June, Club Hut (Wales)

No plans yet but the club hut is reserved for walkers, scramblers and climbers to meet and have fun. If you would like to reserve a space, or offer to lead any activities please contact Sarah Wheatcroft via s.e.wheatcroft@googlemail.com or 07398365990.

4th-6th September, Toc H Chapel Stile, Langdale (Lake District)

With a capacity of 20, this is first-come first-serve for bookings. Walkers, climbers and scramblers welcome. Please contact David Hellyar hellydav@live.co.uk to reserve your space. Claire and Fred Hammonds have kindly agreed to arrange the usual group dining arrangements but if you would be happy to help with cooking let them know!

European week:

24th-31st July, Dolomites

Based in Badia, between Corvara and Pedraces, this is a fantastic area for climbing, mountaineering, via ferrata and walking. It is however very popular and books up quickly! As the trip is on a self-arranged basis, anyone thinking of attending, is advised to make their arrangements for travel and accommodation such as Air B&B ASAP. For any advice, contact Tony Emms (07793 008582 membership-secretary@wbmc.org).

SPECIAL EVENTS/ADVERTS

WBMC AGM

Thursday 19th March 2026, Red Lion, All Saints Way, B71 1RH

Annual General Meeting held at the Red Lion, starts 7:30pm sharp. Arrive early if you want to eat. Would all members please attend this important meeting, minimum 25 full members in attendance to achieve quorum.

Agenda:

1. Roll Call/Apologies
2. Minutes of the 2025 AGM
3. Matters arising (*including special motions, motions to alter constitution/rules must be received in writing and proposed by 7 full members*)
4. Subscriptions for 2027 (*note: hut fees may need to cover tourist tax/membership fees may need to cover BMC increases*)
5. Ratification of officer reports (chair, treasurer, membership, coach, hut)
6. Election of officers [Chair: currently David Hellyar, Vice Chair: currently Darren Groutage, Treasurer: currently Claire Hammonds, Secretary: currently Sarah Wheatcroft, Coach: currently Nigel Tarr, Hut: currently Fred Hammonds, Membership: currently Tony Emms, Newsletter: Sophie Kellaway, Committee: currently Will Read, Luke Austin, Darren Beards & Neil Loydon, 1 vacant]. *Press officer/publicity role currently vacant, suggested additional role for discussion/volunteer is meet co-ordinator (liaison for non-coach meets). To express an interest in standing for any roles please contact Sarah Wheatcroft at least 7 days before the AGM.*
7. Malcolm Collins Award (*nominations invited for a club member with an outstanding achievement in 2025*). Coach King & Queen award.
8. Any other business.

COACH MEET**SUNDAY 8th MARCH: CLWYDIAN RANGE**

Depart: 07:00 – West Brom., Edward St Car Park (B70 8NN)
07:20 – M54 J2

Drop Off: Bodfari (SJ 096 700)
A541 (SJ 172 680)
Loggerheads Country Park (SJ 199 626)

Llanferres (SJ 188 604)
Pick Ups: Llanferres (SJ 188 604)



Required Maps: OS 1:25,000 **OL 265** Clwydian Range: Prestatyn, Mold & Ruthin
OS 1:50,000 **Landranger 116 & 117** Denbigh & Colwyn Bay, Chester & Wrexham

Suggested Routes:-**From Bodfari****Route 1) The length of the Clwydians (11 miles/18km, 1200m ascent)**

Follow footpaths east and climb to the top of Moel y Park (SJ 119 700). Then head south to traverse the ridge over the summits of Penycloddiau, Moel Arthur, Moel Dywyll, Moel Famau, Foel Fenlli & Moel Eithinen. From the final hill, head east down to a well-deserved pint in Llanferres at the Druid Inn. This walk can also be cut short at Moel Famau, reducing the ascent to 1000m.

From A541**Route 2) Moel Arthur & Moel Famau (6 miles/10km, 700m ascent)**

Follow footpaths west to climb Moel Plas-yw and join the main ridge at Moel Arthur. Then head south to traverse the ridge as far as Moel Famau before descending south-east to Llanferres.

From Loggerheads**Route 3) Easy, low level walk and a bad weather option**

Enjoy a stroll around Loggerheads Country Park where there are various trails and options.

Fares: Members £25, Non members £25, Under 18's & Full time students £10
To book your seat contact Nigel Tarr on 07703 345729 or book on the website.

Cancellations after the Wednesday prior to the coach meet will still be charged £10 and failure to turn up without cancelling means the full coach fare will still be expected from you. This includes if you have said "yes" to Nigel on the previous meet!

COACH MEET**SUNDAY 12th APRIL: KESWICK**

Depart: 07:00 – West Brom., Edward St Car Park
(B70 8NN)

07:20 – Penkrigde

Drop Off: Scales NY 343 269
Threkeld NY 325 254
Keswick Coach Station NY 263 235

Pick Ups: Keswick, Threkeld



Required Maps: OS 1:25,000 **OL 5** English Lakes North East
OS 1:50,000 **Landranger 90** Penrith & Keswick

Suggested Routes:-**From Scales****Route 1) Blencathra + various options**

From Scales follow the footpath NE then N and NW before the grade 1 scramble up Sharp Edge (very slippery in wet weather) and round to Blencathra summit. Continue down the SW path down via Blease Fell (5.8 miles, 2100ft ascent), or SSE via Hall's Fell ridge (4.5 miles, 2100ft ascent) down to Threkeld. Alternatively extend the walk by heading North off Blencathra summit and heading NW to Mungrisdale Common, then contour around Lonscale Fell and Latrigg down to Keswick (10 miles, 2200ft ascent).

From Threkeld**Route 2) The Dodds (13 miles, 3650ft ascent)**

From Threkeld follow footpaths S and climb to the summit of Clough Head. Continue S along the ridge over Great Dodd and Stybarrow Dodd before heading west down Stick's pass to Legburthwaite. Head north back to Threkeld, via High Rigg and Low Rigg if you're feeling in need of more hills.

From Keswick**Route 3) Ullock Pike, Skiddaw & Cumbria Way / Allerdale Ramble (13 miles, 32/50ft ascent)**

Follow the Allerdale Ramble NW through Thornthwaite Forest to eventually reach Ravenstone Hotel (236297). From the right side of the hotel, follow a steep path through a conifer wood then take the long heather-clad ridge to Ullock Pike (244287). This was Wainwright's favourite route up Skiddaw. Continue along the slate rocks of Longside Edge to Skiddaw and then descend via the Cumbria Way and the Allerdale Ramble back to Keswick.

Route 4) Cat Bells & back (take money if you want to catch the boat!)

Take paths to Portinscale and then the Cumbria Way to climb Cat Bells (244198). Alternatively, it may be possible to take a Derwent Water Launch (anticlockwise) at the Landing Stage at (264227) to Hawes End to save the walk in. **Distance 12km (8 miles) less if you take the boat cruise one way.**

Fares: Members £25, Non members £25, Under 18's & Full time students £10
To book your seat contact Nigel Tarr on 07703 345729 or book on the website.

Cancellations after the Wednesday prior to the coach meet will still be charged £10 and failure to turn up without cancelling means the full coach fare will still be expected from you.

COACH MEET**SUNDAY 10th MAY: OGWEN**

Depart: 07:00 – West Brom.,
Edward St Car Park (B70 8NN)
07:20 – M54 J2

Drop Off: Pont Cyfyng (735572)
Capel Curig (721582)
Ogwen (656603)

Pick Ups: Ogwen (656603)
Capel Curig (721582)



Required Maps: OS 1:25,000 **OL 17** Snowdon/Yr Wyddfa
OS 1:50,000 **Landranger 115** Snowdon/Yr Wyddfa

Suggested Routes:-**From Pont Cyfyng****Route 1) Moel Siabod (6 miles/9.5km, 3500ft ascent)**

Follow the track to a disused quarry (717555) then continue to Lyn y Foel (713547) from where you can climb the SE ridge of Moel Siabod (Grade1 scramble of Dear Ddu) . From the summit (705546) descend via the NE ridge to GR 713565. Then continue through the forest to Plas y Brenin & Capel Curig where there might / might not be a cafe open before pick-up. Online route for GPS: <https://www.osola.org.uk/rides/OSHubMap.php?f=moel-siabod-via-daer-ddu.gpx&t=moel-siabod-via-daer-ddu.gpx>

From Capel Curig**Route 2) The Glyders and their Eastern ridge (10 miles/15 km)**

From Capel head west and follow the ridge to Gallt Yr Ogof (685586) and continue over Foel Goch (678582) and past Llyn Caseg-Fraith (670584). You should get a classic view of Tryfan's east face from here (made famous by Poucher). You can then ascend Glyder Fach (656583) followed by Glyder Fawr (642580) . Descend south to Pen-y-Pass pick-up or if you sort it with Nigel walk down the road to the Pen Y Gwryd Hotel (but check it's open first!)

From A5 near Llyn Ogwen/Idwal Cottage**Route 3) Tryfan and the Glyders (9 miles/12 km).**

A tough route with 2 grade 1 scrambles possibly. Climb to Tryfan summit (664594) by N. ridge or Heather Terrace. Then climb to the summit of Glyder Fach (656583), possibly by the Bristly Ridge scramble. Continue along the plateau to Glyder Fawr (642579) and descend as in route 2.

Route 4) Y Garn, Foel Goch, Mynydd Perfedd & Elidir Fawr (optional).

For the longer route go into Cwm Idwal and follow west side of the lake to climb Y Garn's east ridge to summit (631596) Then north to Foel-goch (629612). Or you can miss out Y Garn and make the route shorter by taking the old A5 road on the west side of Nant Ffrancon and climb Foel-goch by « the mushroom garden » & its east ridge, Y Llymllwyd. Then north to Mynydd Perfedd (623619) and descend SW to the narrow Bwlch y Marchlyn which leads to the rocky summit of Elidir Fawr. Descend SSW to Nant Peris to avoid the Penrhyn slate quarries & inclines.

COMMITTEE MATTERS

President: John Edwards	07837 198355 jaejed@hotmail.com
Chair: David Hellyar	07547 126286 hellydav@live.co.uk
Vice Chair: Darren Groutage	07973 405348 wmmc.dg@outlook.com
Secretary: Sarah Wheatcroft	07398 365990 secretary@wbmc.org or s.e.wheatcroft@googlemail.com
Treasurer: Claire Hammonds	07761 571464 clairehammonds@btinternet.com
Membership Sec: Tony Emms	07793 008582 membership-secretary@wbmc.org or toniemms@aol.com
Hut Secretary: Fred Hammonds	07527 744481 hut-secretary@wbmc.org or f.hammonds@btinternet.com
Coach Secretary: Nigel Tarr	07703 345729 tarnigel@gmail.com
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COULD THIS BE YOUR CHANCE??? FEEL FREE TO VOLUNTEER	

December Committee Minutes

Apologies: John Edwards, Darren Groutage, Will Read, Sophie Kellaway **Present:** Fred Hammonds, Claire Hammonds, Luke Austin, David Hellyar, Neil Loydon, Nigel Tarr, Tony Emms, Sarah Wheatcroft

Minutes: proposed by Claire, seconded by Luke.

Matters arising: - Pat Mullett donation discussion moved forward to January’s meeting

Officer Reports: **Treasurer:** Currently £24,746 in current account & £31,570 in reserve account. New software is now much more manageable. Payments received from 27 members; Tony to send reminder for payments due end of January. Away dinner - 5 deposits paid. Scottish week of 15 attendees 6 paid, 9 deposits. Hut income has increased on previous year, however more money has been spent. Nov Coach loss of £500 is to come down to £400

Hut Secretary: Hut sheet 10 from 25/10 -19/11 shows 19 beds & £187.60 donations. Sheet 11 29/11 to 7/12 28 beds & £232 donations. Good weekend had by Old Timers. Tree felled at back of hut. Don’t take any more wood due to restrictions from the Welsh government. Fire has had a new grate at a cost of £200 & it is working brilliantly. Also 2 new lights in bathroom. After a storm took out the WiFi, new internet has been installed with new cabling. For the April scrambling meet w/e the hut is already booked out so will look at the Lakes for venue.

Will be used 5 - 7th June for North Wales scrambling

4 - 6th September Scrambling / climbing w/e Chapel Stile booked for 20 places at a cost of £200pn instead of £500 pn due to our Club status - needs to be advertised in the newsletter.

BMC: Do we need to carry out weekly inspections under new government regulations? We have already had our fire inspection. Clarification needed at the seminar on 7 - 8th February.

Membership Secretary: Currently 215 members & 19 new enquiries, 9 of which seem fairly certain to join.

Coach Secretary: 42 on December coach, good day had by all but Gary was a little perturbed due to worry that we wouldn’t get away on time. Meets in future will need to align with the driver’s working hours. On Jan coach meet, Dave H is going to lead a walk up Llanberis path for a low or level walk around the lake. 18 are booked on coach so far.

AOB: Hut end of March Patterdale end of June. As Committee are all in approval, Gaz LP will run knowledge sharing days around Winter skills, on Winter Week. Neil L is to liaise with him, and anyone Committee are aware of that may benefit.

January Committee Minutes

Apologies: Will Read, Luke Austin

Present: John Edwards, Fred Hammonds, Claire Hammonds, David Helyar, Neil Loydon, Nigel Tarr, Tony Emms, Sarah Wheatcroft, Darren Beards, Nigel Tarr, Darren Groutage, Sophie Kellaway.

Minutes: proposed by Claire, accepted by Fred

Matters arising-Pat Mullett donation

Officer Reports: Treasurer: Currently £37,366 in current account, with £5600 to deduct for BMC subs and Scottish weekend. £31,570 in reserve account. Membership payments are coming in with 115 paid so far. Scottish winter week, 38 have paid deposit with ¾ paid in full. Away dinner 12 deposits paid. Turbin & Turbin have confirmed that we do not have to pay capital gains. Currently using Quickbooks. £968 deposit to pay to the Hawthorns for the 75th Anniversary party. John Edwards has informed the committee that a donation of £200 has come in from Brian Hart. Treasurers paperwork with our charity reference number has been passed from Johns keeping to Claire Hammonds. David Helyar has confirmed that the deposit for the George Starkey hut will be paid for out of the clubs current account.

Hut Secretary: Hut sheet 12 10/12/25 to 04/01/26, 76 nights, £694.50 donations, 16 members 9 guests 4 children. No kindling when Sarah arrived on 12th Jan a reminder needs to be added to the newsletter. Boiler on the wall is not to be used due to the cost of running it. The electricity bill was £111.53 -the new heaters are now being used. 2 cubic meters of wood have been purchased at £190, hopefully this will last until summer. The hut lease was paid quarterly on 9th Jan, next payment is due in March. Fred had again emailed Plas Gwynant for the water bill.

Membership Secretary: Currently 118 paid members, 2 life members that do not need to pay are still doing so. 12 new members with 3 prospective. Membership numbers- the coding starts with a 7, for some reason this has changed to a 9, in order to simplify things Tony would like to keep the 7's as it makes it easier to keep track on members numbers. Can we look at setting up a direct debit or standing order for membership renewal in 2027?

Coach Secretary: 28 on the coach for January, with 4/5 no shows, some had paid. Some unable to come because of the snow. £245 down. Robinsons prices are increasing slightly to Wales and the lakes. Sophie will need details of Coach drop offs from March after Clwydian for Keswick, Ogwyn and Carneddu. The led walks are going well, will anyone volunteer to lead Patterdale (Dave)?

Additional notes about coach meets: Suitable footwear must be worn on all meets. Passing skills on to new members should be available such as teaching the use of ice axe and crampons. The equipment needed is dependent on conditions and above the snow line an ice axe and crampons must be taken/used.

75th Anniversary in 2027: Deposit for the Hawthorns to secure venue to be paid.

AOB: Pat Mullett donation. It has been voted upon that a young person to benefit from Pats donation will be set at 21 with discretion up to 25. Criteria to apply will be reserved for club members only. The funding can be used to supply suitable outdoor apparel.

A while back, Darren and Fred applied to BMC to do training for novices but heard nothing from them. Darren has now managed to get onto the course, does anyone else want to join Darren on 7th-9th February? If for any reason Darren can't make it the cost is £95 the course may cancel if under subscribed the club will cover the cost if this is the case.

BMC: Nothing new to report as per December meeting, do we need to carry out weekly inspections under new government regulations? We have already had our fire inspection. Clarification needed at the seminar on 7-8th February

Newsletter: Information needed for the European week taking place the last week in July.

Scrambling weekends – who is organising and where are they taking place? Match 27th-29th WBMC hut, April 17th-19th WBMC hut is booked, venue tbc, June 5-7th George Starkey hut in Patterdale organised by ?. Sarah & Matt are doing the catering. September 4-6th Chapel stile Weirside, organised by David Helyar, Claire has volunteered to do the catering. Lastly, Tony had let the committee know that Ellie Sparrowhawk had been in contact with package prices for Dolomites to look into for 2027.

Hut Secretary's Energy Saving Requests:

Information is applicable for all users of the hut, old and new!

- ◇ Don't use the water boiler if there are less than 5 people staying; use the kettle please.
- ◇ When using the water boiler turn off when going out & at night; as it wastes a lot of electric.
- ◇ Don't use the tumble drier for single items, wait till you have a load or use the drying racks above the log burner.
- ◇ Before leaving the hut, can you empty the tumble drier's water tank (at the bottom of the machine) & lint collector inside the door (as it's a fire hazard).
- ◇ Replace kindling that you have used. You can use any small logs from the wood store and chop it outside. It will take about 15 minutes to do.
- ◇ Be frugal with the use of the electric heating panels. Note the log burner is the main source of heat. The panels offer instant heat to take the chill off, until you have a fire lit or you have gone out for the day.
- ◇ READ the information in the blue signing in folder, after signing in and always test the smoke and carbon dioxide alarms.
- ◇ Clean all cooker and work surfaces down, with the cleaning products provided and clean the hut before you leave.
- ◇ Don't leave it to others who are staying to do!
- ◇ Please Note - Only one gas bottle needs to be turned on for the gas cooker. The SPARE tagged one is ready for use when the other is empty. This can be done by switching the red arrow control lever over & opening the valve on the new bottle.
- ◇ To avoid disappointment, take a hut pack with you when you visit :
 - ◆ Hut slippers
 - ◆ Kindling
 - ◆ Newspaper
 - ◆ Matches
 - ◆ Tea Towel
 - ◆ Toilet roll, etc.

Club trips

January's Coach to Llanberis

January's coach meet was unfortunately a bit of a wash out, with the previous week's heavy snow melting/washing away in the rain, and 60-70mph winds on the summits. One group managed a successful winter skills training session on Moel Siabod and one intrepid soul tried the Pyg track but turned back due to knee high snow drifts. The largest group set off for Moel Eilio but retreated due to the high wind. The most successfully trip of the day was Dave Hellyar bravely taking the led walk up the Llanberis path to halfway house before returning to warm up by a log fire in the pub. Well done to all who tackled the challenging conditions. Unsurprisingly, no photos were sent in of this trip...



Left: 2025 by Sophie Kellaway



Right: 2026 by John Edwards

February's Coach to Patterdale

Groups set off aiming for a variety of routes including the Striding Edge/ Swirral Edge circuit, St Sunday's Crag (including one group aiming for Pinnacle Ridge), Helvellyn Gully 2 and Place Fell. Conditions made some of these routes impossible but several members successfully tackled Striding Edge in remarkably similar conditions to last year - you can't say we over-promise!

Paul Brindley kindly stepped in at the last minute to plan and take a group on what looked like a beautiful led walk over Glenridding Common and Sheffield Pike via Hole in the Wall and Red Tarn, big thank you to Paul!

Gully 2, photo by Ken Priest



Led walk, photo by Sunny



Scottish Week

President's Pensive Perambulations on the Scottish Winter Week

What a great week 54 of us (plus dogs Alfie, Juno & Loki) enjoyed up in the Cairngorms during February half term! After so much wet weather in the W. Midlands, to get a week of largely sub-zero temperatures and scarcely a drop of rain was a real bonus, although it did get very windy in the last 3 days, so much so that they had to close the roads to the Choire Chais car park on Wednesday & Thursday because they couldn't keep up with the snowdrifts that kept blowing in !! Nevertheless Vanessa spotted that Cairngorm Mountain Resort had posted that **"Tuesday 17th was notable for some of the best conditions we've had up in Scotland for years"** and Chris Dean enjoyed 3 cracking days of blue skies & sunshine even before the rest of us arrived.



I think everyone enjoyed the help-yourself, buffet-style meals at the Coylumbridge Hotel, even though the seating arrangements in tables of 4 & lots of children dashing around made things tricky at times. And the 7am start to breakfast helped some of us get the early starts necessary to guarantee a parking space 'up the hill'.

Of course I can't let this opportunity pass without thanking, on everyone's behalf, **Jonathan Howells** very much indeed for his hard work in organising our accommodation in a hotel where the chain didn't make his task any easier this year by not responding to his emails. I believe this is the 19th year he has organised the Scottish Winter Week, having taken over from Nev Tandy for our first visit to "The Highlander Hotel" at Newtonmore in 2008, then moving it west to Fort William in 2012 before returning to the Cairngorms in 2025. What amazing value he gets us for, with breakfasts at £16 & dinners £26 (or thereabouts), those of us who are room sharing are paying just £5.10 per night for a bed & access to all the other hotel facilities!!

And I'd also like to thank all those I walked with during the week - I think there were around 24 different people which could be something of a record for me – very much for their company, their help with navigating and, although they might not have realised it, the positive way their just being there helped when I was feeling knackered! Pics of some of them below.



(Left) Gaz LP, Ian M, Bill D & Rob A on Day 5's ascent of Carn an Fhreiceadain & Beinn Bhreac.

(Centre) Sara W, Pete P, James T, Sophie Bates & others on top of Ben MacDui (Day 3) and (Right) back down from the Corbett, Geal Charn, at Dorbach Lodge (Day 4) with Chris D having just given Claire H, Hilary J, Paul Johnson & I one of his personalised treats for surviving a windy spindrift day!

Scottish Week - in stats and pictures

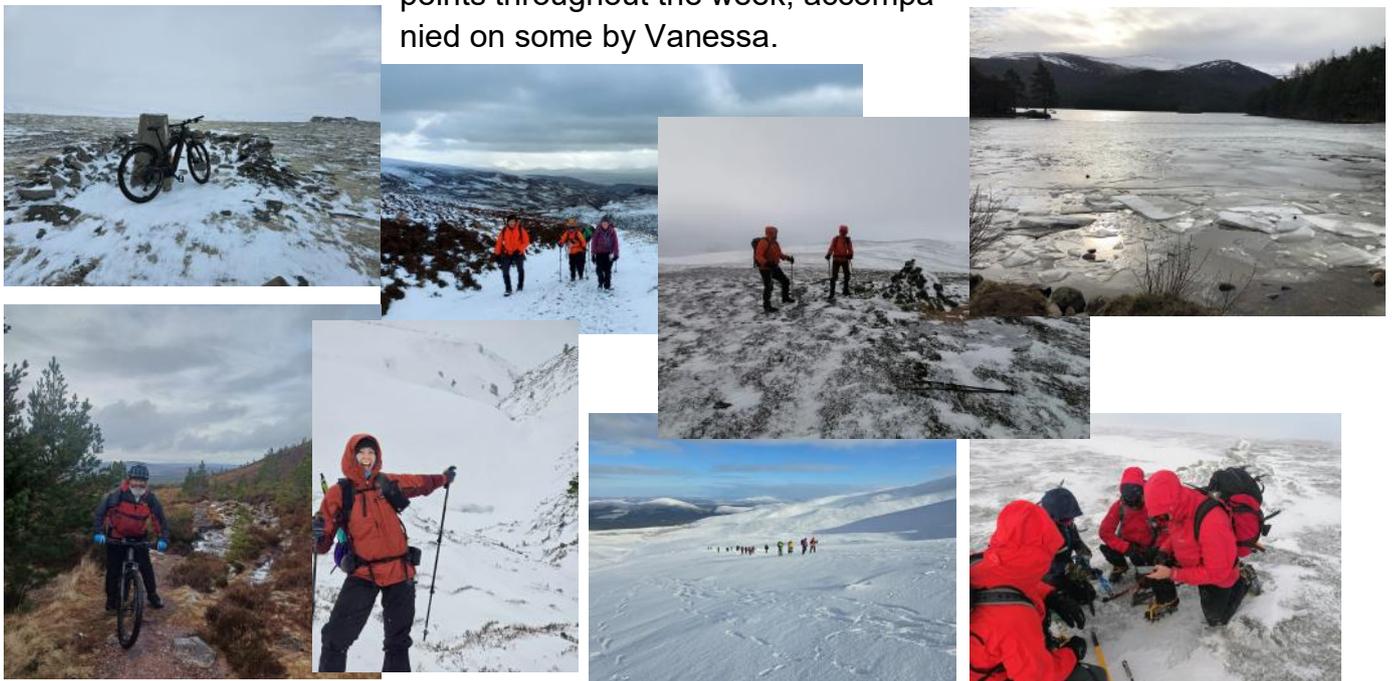


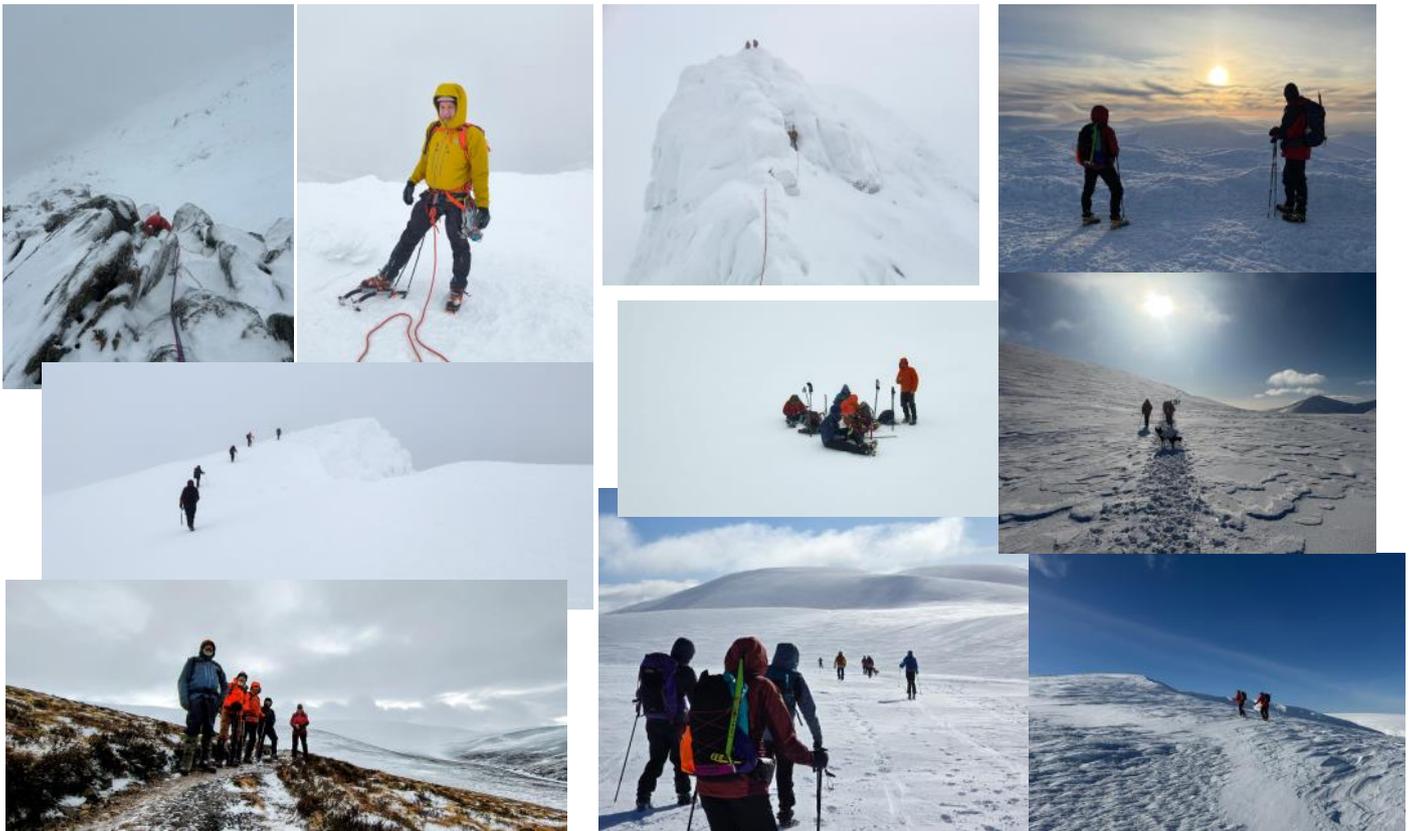
Highest peak: Ben Macdui, tackled by a large group including Sophie B, Sara, Gary, John E, Tracy, Tony, Adrian, James and Pete. Soft powdery snow made the walk an even longer one than usual but the gorgeous sun made it all worthwhile.

Most Munros: Chris Dean got out over 6 Munros + 2 Corbetts, wow! Tactical use of an extended stay with good weather for two days, he decided to head out to Creag Meagaidh to do the three Munros over there. Worked out a great day with great views from Carn Liath and Stob Poite Coire Ardair, which had not been up since my first Scottish Winter week in 2007 then onto Creag Meagaidh. The following day stayed more local going up Sgor Gaoith as never had views from it (a trait it shared with the rest of the club later in the week!).

Queens of consistency: Claire Hammonds & Hilary Jones with 6 routes of 9-12 miles a day, including two corbetts, one ridge day, two bothies, one wild and windy whiteout and one glorious alpine day. Lots of micro navigation and lots of plotting and planning with OS Maps.

Mountain biking: Jonathan Howells visited 113.7 miles of forest tracks, loch-side paths and trig points throughout the week, accompanied on some by Vanessa.





The cool climbers: Neil Loydon & Taaibah Hossein, got the ropes and the gear out on Hobnailer's Gully (II) and Duke's Rib (II) on Creagan Cha-no. Abseil down, climb back up, chip the rime ice off the hiking poles and nav off in a white-out, brrr!

Most exposure: Bill Douglas & co crossed the Fiacail ridge (I/II) to the top of Coire an t-Sneachda in incredible conditions, from looking at the pictures I can't decide if it's more or less scary when the ridge, the sides and everything below are all white!

Remote exploration: Gaz Peasland, Sophie Kellaway & Chris Lazarz descended Coire Raibert to Loch Avon. A slightly dodgy but frequently used footpath in summer, this apparently becomes an excellent descent most often used by backcountry skiers in winter. By foot meant powdery traverses, front pointing down the side of a waterfall and some slightly unorthodox belly flopping over snowbridges over the insufficiently frozen burn.

Creatures great and small: 1 mountain hare, several ptarmigans, many coos, 1 golden eagle over Drumochter, 1 suspected Scottish wildcat sprinting over the road to Feshiebridge and an encounter with Nigel the capercaillie! Signs of beavers observed, but alas, no beavers.

Pints of Cairngorm Gold IPA drunk: the last keg in the hotel and every bottle too (a joint effort, well done all).



Repair Services that can extend the life of your kit.

A special article by Claire Hammonds

Berghaus offer a free repair service for most kit with the exception of tents and Pac Light Coats. Once you've completed the online form and they have confirmed they can repair, you will be required to cover the postage cost .

I used the service on 2 items: Pac Light Waterproof trousers (tear) and a down jacket (replacement zip) in December and was impressed with the speed and quality of the repair.

Note Berghaus pay for the return post.

If you have any Berghaus kit in need of a repair, use the link below:

<https://www.berghaus.com/repairs.list>

Paramo also offers a repair service , but this is priced on the type of repair needed.

I used this service 2 years ago to have my old Paramo cascade jacket repaired. I had a new front zip, the cuffs replaced and new Velcro on. I was impressed with the quality of the repair, though it did take approximately 2 months to complete due to demand at the time.

<https://paramo-clothing.com/en-gb/customer-service/>

Kit exchange

If you have old kit that no longer fits or is no longer used, why not sell or pass it on to other club members? Members are looking to organise a bring and buy sale, tentatively 16th April at the Red Lion social meet.

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