



TRIP NOTES

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# BELIEVE ACHIEVE INSPIRE

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NATIONAL THREE PEAKS  
CHALLENGE  
UK

Fri 10 Sep - Sun 12 Sep 2021





## In aid of St Margaret's Hospice Care

10 Sep - 12 Sep 2021



### 3 DAYS | UK | TOUGH

Brace yourself for a fast-paced and physically challenging adventure, as you take on the three highest peaks in England, Scotland and Wales. Considered one of Britain's toughest outdoor challenges, the National 3 Peaks Challenge takes in the dizzy heights of Ben Nevis (1,344m), Scafell Pike (978m) and Snowdon (1,085m).

Over the course of two days, you will trek around 26 miles and ascend to a total height of almost 3,000m. This is a serious and tough challenge which requires a good level of fitness, as well as plenty of grit and determination. Ultimately, however, your hard work will be rewarded with spectacular views and a huge sense of achievement.

**Please Note:** We have listened to recent criticism regarding the impact that 24 Hour National 3 Peak challenges were having on the local areas. Our itinerary is designed to minimise these negative impacts. Whilst we aim to complete this challenge as fast as possible we will not do so to the detriment of local communities that this challenge passes through or with any reduction in the safety of the challenge. Please read our specific [National 3 Peaks Responsible Tourism](#) policy for more information.

- Take on the 3 highest mountains in the UK
- Be one of the first hikers of the day to take on Ben Nevis
- Tackle Scafell Pike at night
- Finish your challenge on Wales's infamous peak, Snowdon
- Aim to summit all three peaks in 24hrs!

## YOUR CHALLENGE DAY BY DAY

### DAY 1 Fri 10 Sep

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#### Friday

The day begins at 10.30am as the group finally meets at Chester train Station. Following a warm welcome, we head off by road to Fort William in Scotland. We will stop off in a local Scottish Highland town where you will have the opportunity to buy dinner, before we check-in to our hostel in Glen Nevis, Fort William, right at the base of Ben Nevis. We will conduct the challenge safety and then it will be time to turn in for the night ahead of tomorrow's early start for our big adventure.

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### DAY 2 Sat 11 Sep

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#### Ben Nevis and Scafell Pike

It's a super early start (5am), as we head off to tackle the first of the three peaks.

Standing at the western end of the Grampian Mountains, Ben Nevis is the highest mountain in the British Isles and is formed from the collapsed dome of an ancient volcano. The trail up to the summit begins on the eastern side of Glen Nevis, from where we follow a steep path up to the saddle of Lochan Meall an t-Suidhe (570m). From here we then begin a zigzag ascent up the western flank of Ben Nevis to the summit. There are only ten miles to cover, but they will be challenging and will take some six hours to do. Be sure to stay mindful and aware at all times as the path is uneven and slippery in parts.

The pay-off at the top is immense. On a clear day, the views can stretch for 120 miles across the Torridon Hills, Ben Lomond and out towards County Antrim in Northern Ireland. The group will transfer by vehicle southwards towards Wasdale in the Lake District. Dinner will be served before we transfer to Wasdale Head for our ascent of Scafell Pike (978m). Scafell Pike is the highest mountain in England and consists of a steep ascent involving some easy scrambling in places. We will descend in darkness before trying to catch some sleep on the drive to Snowdonia.

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### DAY 3 Sun 12 Sep

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#### Snowdon

Hopefully you will have had time to recharge for another early start. Time is at a premium, however, as the final peak still awaits us. Driving on to Pen y Pass at the high end of the Lanberis Pass, we follow a rocky trail along the Pyg Track to the top of Snowdonia National Park in Wales.

Teamwork and determination are all important as we forge our way onwards and upwards to conquer this final challenge. Snowdon and its surrounding peaks have been described as true examples of alpine typography and from our elevated viewpoint you can take in the surrounding lakes and cwms and, weather permitting, some of the most extensive views in the British Isles. On a clear day you can see four kingdoms, 24 counties, 29 lakes and 17 islands!

Resting at the top for some group photos and impromptu celebrations, we head back to our vehicle for the drive back to Chester.

There is no accommodation arranged for the final evening, so you may wish to consider booking an extra night's accommodation to rest after the challenge. If you are returning home by train please make sure you have booked an open ticket, as timings will depend very much on the group's speed and ability.

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**NB**

Please Note: We do not guarantee completing this challenge in 24 hours. Charity Challenge believe that running the event in this manner is more responsible to the environments and local communities we pass through.

The itinerary is there as a guide and may change due to unusual weather patterns, the strength of the group, or other unforeseen circumstances. We will do our very best to keep to the set itinerary, however we cannot be held responsible for any last minute changes that may occur. In all such circumstances though, your challenge leader will have the final say.

## HOW TO FUND YOUR CHALLENGE

### MINIMUM SPONSORSHIP

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Registration fee of £75.00 when you book

Raise a minimum of £775.00 for your charity.

## WHAT'S INCLUDED

### Before you go

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- 15% off Cotswold Outdoor, Cycle Surgery, Snow and Rock, and Runners Need
- 16 and 20 week trek/bike training schedule
- Warm up exercise routines
- Access to training weekends (optional and at additional expense)
- Access to your own password protected account including support materials and training schedules
- Travel to and from the challenge start/finish point

### On your challenge

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- Accommodation during the challenge (usually in twin share)
- All challenge management before, during and post event
- Full back-up support including first-aid qualified staff and first-aid supplies
- Drinking water on challenge days
- Three meals a day (unless otherwise stated in the itinerary)

## WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

### Before you go

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- Clothing and equipment listed on your Kit List

### On your challenge

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- Personal spending money
- Any other specific items listed as not included in your Trip Notes

## THE DETAILS

### Fundraising deadlines

You will need to send your sponsorship money to the charity as you raise it. At least 80% of the minimum sponsorship required must be sent to the charity 10 weeks before departure (by 02/07/2021), and the remaining 20% within 4 weeks of completing the challenge (by 10/10/2021). If you have raised the necessary funds, the charity will then pay the balance of your challenge costs. The charity benefits by keeping the remaining sponsorship money and every pound over and above that you raise.

### Raising the sponsorship

St Margaret's Hospice Care has been at the heart of Somerset's community for over 40 years, delivering high quality, responsive and compassionate care to patients and their families facing a life-limiting illness. Whether it is for days, weeks, months, even years, the time patients spend being cared for and supported by St Margaret's Hospice Care is precious and cherished. Through our medical expertise, nursing skills and specialist support services, we provide physical, emotional and spiritual care to our patients, their families and carers.

### Typical group size

The typical group size is 12 - 14 participants

### Optional extras

Trek/bike training weekends\*  
(\*subject to availability)

### Why book with Charity Challenge

- Everything included from the moment you arrive. Unlike other operators we include everything from accommodation, breakfast first thing in the morning, dinner enroute to Scafell Pike, transfers to the start of the trek and back again and plenty of lunch and snacks whilst on the trek.
- The very best Mountain Leaders, who are fully qualified, highly experienced, knowledgeable and fun. They will do everything to help you complete the challenge and have a great time doing it.
- We also make sure we use a locally based leader for each mountain. Not only do they have local knowledge, but they will always be fresh to deal with any difficulties, making sure your safety is always looked after.
- We used high quality mini-coaches with plenty of room and professional drivers. This challenge involves a lot of time on the bus and we believe that having a little bit of extra comfort helps everyone to have the best chance to rest between each of the peaks.
- Bus transfer to/from Chester train station included in the cost. Let us make travelling to/from this challenge as easy as possible for you.
- Ethical consideration. We listened to recent feedback from the areas visited on the National 3 Peaks and have altered our itinerary to minimise the negative impact we might have and to maximise the positive impacts.
- The highest quality National 3 Peaks experience on the market!

### How do we manage the 24 hour aspect of this challenge?

This challenge is famously attempted within a 24 hour period. Charity Challenge view this time period as being from when you begin the trek on Ben Nevis, to when you then reach the summit of Snowdon.

However, it is important that whilst we shall attempt to facilitate you completed the challenge in this way there are a number of factors that often impact upon this timing.

- The ability of the group. We want all participants to complete the challenge, and have a great time doing this. To this end we run this challenge as a 'group challenge' and we encourage you all to help and support each other to complete the challenge together.
- The traffic on the roads. We will never ask our drivers to drive in an unsafe fashion, or to drive without the necessary rest periods.
- Obeying the law! Driver's hour regulations stipulate that drivers may only drive for 15 hours, and must take a 45 minute break every 4.5 hours. Many operators seek to find ways around these laws but we believe this our imperative for running this challenge safely.

Your safety will always be our number one priority, and we ask you to always respect any decisions our leaders make regarding group management during the challenge.

For more information about how we manage the driver hours and the 'walking as a group' aspect of this challenge with regards to achieving the challenge in 24 hours please read our [National 3 Peaks Responsible Tourism](#) policy.

### Challenge Timings

#### Ben Nevis

On the first day of the challenge, the group will set out very early in the morning (approx. 5am) to climb Ben Nevis. It usually takes between 6-7 hours walking for each mountain.

All participants must return to the buses and be ready to leave from Glen Nevis by 1pm.

### Scafell Pike.

After Ben Nevis we will drive to Scafell Pike, stopping for dinner and our drivers mandatory stop. We will arrive in time to begin our summit bid by early evening.

All participants must return to the buses and be ready to leave from by midnight.

### Snowdon.

After descending back down from Scafell you will then have the opportunity to try and catch some sleep as we drive to Snowdon to begin our ascent by mid-morning. The challenge will conclude late afternoon/early evening by returning to Chester train station.

Please note, that whilst we do everything to stick to these timings, the National 3 Peaks timings can be very difficult to guarantee. Slow moving groups or traffic can have significant timings. In particular, please take this into account when planning your return journey at the end of the challenge.

### Level of Difficulty

The National 3 Peaks challenge is graded as **tough**. This is the perfect challenge for participants who are looking to take on an iconic challenge that will test you both physically and mentally over an extended period of time. Ideally you will be comfortable completing prolonged periods of exercise and have experience of hill walking in the UK (and if you don't have this level just now, that's what training is for!)

You can tell your supporters that on your National 3 Peaks Challenge you will be:

- Trekking for around 18 hours during the challenge.
- Covering over 28 miles of undulating terrain. Over a full marathon distance, but with 3 hills!
- Ascending a total of 3000m in a single day. Almost the same amount of ascent as summiting Kilimanjaro!
- Summiting the 3 highest hills in the UK, Ben Nevis (1344m) Scafell Pike (977m) and Snowdon (1085m)

### Clothing & Equipment

During this challenge you will be able to leave any change of clothes, or additional equipment, on the bus whilst you climb each peak. However, please keep additional clothing to an absolute minimum as space on the bus is limited.

Good quality and durable kit could make the difference between a fantastic challenge experience and an uncomfortable one. For this challenge, waterproof and well-worn in boots will be indispensable. The terrain is uneven and can be very rough, so it is vital that you use a strong pair of canvas or leather boots with good ankle support rather than trekking trainers for this challenge. This should be coupled with good quality walking socks.



During this challenge you will be required to walk at night and so a good quality headtorch (with spare batteries) is absolutely essential. We recommend a headtorch to enable you to keep both hands free.

The benefits of a comfortable day sack cannot be underestimated - so make sure that you train with this. Other essentials are high quality gore-tex waterproof and windproof jackets and trousers, as well as technical/wicking t-shirts rather than cotton shirts. We would like to emphasise that jeans are not recommended for this challenge. Walking poles are also recommended as a preventative, as well as for anyone with any pre-existing leg injuries or niggles.

A full kit list for this challenge can be found [here](#). Once you book you will have access to kit discounts with our partners The Outdoor Shop, Outdoorhire and Cotswold Outdoor.

### Training

The National 3 Peaks challenge involves early mornings, long days and sustained periods of ascents and descents. It is certainly not for the fainthearted, and it should ideally be undertaken by someone who has trained on similar terrain within the UK. The ideal training for this challenge is, naturally, hill walking. However, if you do not have the luxury of living near the hills, then the stairs at home (or an office block) are a great place to start. Most training should be part of an ongoing lifestyle, but if this is not the case then you should begin training 2-4 months prior to the challenge and gradually build up as suggested. Remember to use the walking boots that you will be wearing on the challenge in order to get them worn in, and take the daysack that you will be using during the challenge.

The National 3 Peaks challenge is a real endurance event and you should gear your training towards being comfortable doing exercise for prolonged periods of time. Recovery times are also important to consider, and again you should structure your training so that you are comfortable exercising again after only a few hours rest.

There is no substitute for walking in the hills so try if possible to get out on a weekend and train in an area with steep hills. You should progress to training with your boots on from week 4 at the latest, but preferably from week 1. The more you exercise before the expedition, the more you will get out of it.

### Money

During the trek there will be opportunities to purchase some extra snacks or a cup of tea, for which you shouldn't need more than £20 excluding your joining and returning home travel costs. You will be able to stop in service stations along the way if necessary, where credit or debit cards can also be used.

### Insurance

We don't offer insurance for our UK trips, as any medical emergencies would naturally be covered through the NHS. Therefore the main thing that you will not be covered for is cancellation, and you can read our cancellation policy in our terms and conditions by clicking [here](#). If you wish, you could look into your own policy that covers cancellation for travel within the UK.

### Group size

Our minimum group size for this challenge is 12 and the maximum is normally 56. There will be a mountain leader throughout the challenge coordinating, an additional mountain leader on each hill, and a professional driver.

### Leadership

We employ experienced and fully qualified Mountain Leaders to accompany and lead you. The mountain leaders are first aid qualified and have extensive experience in leading expeditions throughout Britain and overseas. They will be ultimately responsible for the running of the itinerary and the safety of your group. They will be carrying full safety equipment and mountain first aid kits with them at all times.

We also make sure that we use a local leader on each mountain. These leaders not only have great local knowledge, but they will also join the group fresh. Having fresh leaders is vital to maintaining high standards of safety.

### Climate

As you know, the weather in the UK can be highly unpredictable and at times erratic, so being prepared is the key! We will run this challenge between June and September, and although the summer months of June-August should be, in general, warmer, sunnier and more stable in terms of the weather conditions, we all know that this isn't always the case. Snow can frequently still be seen on Ben Nevis in the middle of the summer. Please check the weather forecasts to ensure that you bring clothing suitable for both warm and sunny temperatures as well as wind and downpours.

### Terrain

Despite its location in the UK, the difficulty of this trek should not be underestimated as it includes two days of hiking, with tough ascents and descents. The terrain will be varied and the ascents and descents exhausting at times, but the rewards and the views will be unforgettable.

### Adhering to driver hours regulations

The DVSA provides guidelines and legislation that governs driver's hours during the National 3 Peaks. Many operators will find ways to 'beat' the rules as adhering to driver's hours is a hindrance to completing the challenge in under 24 hours. Charity Challenge are proud that we use only full-time, professional drivers and bus companies who adhere to driver's hours. We do this because we wish to be as safe as possible and we believe that asking a driver to drive a minibus for 24 hours with minimal breaks and sleeping in the bus is not conducive to keep our groups safe.

As a rough overview, drivers must stop for 30 minutes every 4.5 hours, and they must not spend more than 15 hours driving in a 24 hour period. For these reasons we build in a rest stop between Ben Nevis and Scafell and also change drivers between Scafell and Snowdon.

Google maps states that it is 5 hours 36 minutes to drive from Ben Nevis to Scafell Pike. Therefore we stop at a service station just north of Carlisle. At this service station your leader will pre-order dinner for you. This stop allows the drive to conform to driver hour regulations, and allows you to have a proper meal and recharge your batteries before you start on Scafell. We have found that this stop has a huge impact on peoples ability to complete Scafell Pike, which is widely seen as the toughest of the 3 peaks due to it being undertaken at night.

Driver hours also stipulate that a driver can only drive for 15 hours before he has a mandatory 10 hour break. This means that our drivers start their clocks the moment they collect us at the foot of Ben Nevis, and that they must be at the driver change over point 15 hours later. Our driver will swap with a colleague of his near Chester. The implication that this has is that we must ensure that everyone is back at the bus after Scafell Pike with 3 hours left on our drivers clock. This gives you plenty of time on Scafell, but your leader will keep a close monitor on the timings and may be required to turn people back who will struggle to hit these times.

### What happens if we are delayed by traffic?

Our itinerary and timings takes into account the possibility of traffic delays, so by adhering to the cut-off times on Ben Nevis and Scafell we have flexibility to keep the challenge running even if we hit some traffic. However, on occasions we are faced with significant traffic delays of over an hour which can impede the amount of time you have on each mountain.

*Between Ben Nevis and Scafell Pike:* On this section of the itinerary we have the greatest amount of time pressure. If you have left Ben Nevis by 1pm and only made the designated drivers rest stop then there is plenty of time to overcome traffic and summit Scafell. However, if traffic delays do occur on this section then this does not alter the requirement for you to leave Wasdale Head by midnight. We are unable to alter this as it allows us to fully comply with driver hour regulations. It is important to stress that this is extremely rare, but in these scenarios Charity Challenge is not responsible for altering the itinerary or providing additional buses or drivers. We realise that this can mean that groups do not have time to summit Scafell Pike but adhering to driver hours and keeping you safe is our priority.

*Between Scafell Pike and Snowdon:* It is extremely unlikely that traffic delays will occur during this section as you complete this in the early hours of Sunday morning. However, should delays or diversions impact this section then we are still required to adhere to driver hours (please see below section).

### Responsible Tourism

At Charity Challenge we are committed to sustainable and responsible tourism, and work closely with bodies such as the [International Porter Protection Group](#) and [Climate Care](#) to ensure that our challenges benefit the local environments and communities in which they take place. We ensure that all rubbish is disposed of responsibly, and following local guidelines on cultural and environmental protection and respect, we aim to limit our impact on the natural environment. In addition to taking these practical steps to ensure that our challenges are sustainable, we also make a contribution each year to a number of local community projects, so as to give something back directly to the communities that we visit. Since 2000 we have donated almost £200,000 to such projects, supporting a range of initiatives, including schooling for children in Africa, shelter for street children in Brazil, and Orang-utan conservation in Indonesia. We recommend that any gifts brought over for children are given to the UK challenge leader and distributed where needed by them and our local Ground Agent. If you wish to do more, you should consider buying drinks, postcards and souvenirs from the local vendors. For many, it is their sole source of income.

For more information, please visit our [Responsible Tourism](#) pages, where you will be able to view a list of the projects that we currently support.

### Getting There

Challengers will be meeting at 10.30am at Chester train Station, which has regular train services across the UK. Here you'll meet up with the team before departing by road for Fort William in Scotland, where the group will be staying overnight in a hostel.

### Accommodation

You will spend the first night in hostel style same sex dormitories in the Glen Nevis youth hostel in Fort William, Scotland. This hostel is at the very foot of Ben Nevis making our start on Saturday morning very easy.

On the Saturday night you will need to sleep on the bus between Scafell Pike and Snowdon.

### Food & Drink

All meals while on the challenge are provided, from breakfast on the first morning, to lunch on the final day climbing Snowdon. You should also think about packing some extra snacks (chocolate, nuts, snack bars etc) to keep you going while on the challenge.

Please note that dinner on the drive from Chester to Fort William is not included. The bus will stop when we are north of Glasgow and you will have the opportunity to eat a proper meal at a local pub or cafe.

### Toilets

There will be bathroom facilities at the beginning and end of climb; however during the challenge such facilities will be limited to the great outdoors.

### Safety

Charity Challenge considers the safety of all of our participants and staff to be a top priority, and as such we have set up Challenge Safe, one of the most advanced and thorough safety management systems in the industry. Challenge Safe formalises our ethos when it comes to safety, and brings together the procedures and risk management strategies that we use to audit all aspects of our challenges, from vehicles to accommodation to the challenge activity itself. Your welfare is absolutely paramount!

Here are a couple of important points that you should be aware of:

- This is a significant physical challenge over a prolonged period of time. Please make sure that your fitness level is suitable to meeting this challenge.

- This challenge involves walking at night. Please come prepared for this by bringing a headtorch with spare batteries.
- You will be climbing the 3 highest mountains in the UK and the weather between each mountain can vary enormously. Please come prepared with clothing and kit for all weather.
- Please make sure you always wear a seatbelt whilst travelling on the bus.

### Emergencies

Your walk leader team are trained to deal with emergency situations in remote areas and will be carrying a mobile phone in case the emergency services need to be contacted. The event is not run as a race and you will never be encouraged to walk at a pace 'beyond your ability'. There will always be a wide variety in people's walking abilities which will be carefully managed by the leader team. This team will always keep the group together for maximum safety on each peak and set a sensible pace for all to achieve this challenge within this time period.



This was the toughest physical endurance event I have ever done, but in the end it was well worth it and so satisfying to complete. The guides and organisation were brilliant and kept everyone going with their humour and knowledge of the area. It is something I would highly recommend.

Jon Goss



As tough as the challenge may be, we were lucky to have this opportunity.

Vina Patel



The 3 Peaks Challenge is a tough weekend which will test not only your physical capabilities but also your mental toughness. The aches and pains will fade fast but the memories and sense of achievement will last forever.

Derek Robinson

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## Any more questions?

Contact us:

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