

CH>RITY
CH>LLENGE



TRIP NOTES

**BELIEVE
ACHIEVE
INSPIRE**

**WINTER BEN NEVIS WEEKEND
CHALLENGE
UK**

Fri 24 Mar - Sun 26 Mar 2023





In aid of your choice of charity

24 Mar - 26 Mar 2023

3 DAYS | UK | EXTREME

Challenge yourself to reach the summit of the UK's highest mountain, Ben Nevis, in winter! This incredible winter challenge is set over an entire weekend. On the first day of the challenge you will be taught all the skills you will need in order to complete the challenge. From kicking steps in the snow, to using crampons and ice axes, our instructors will help you develop key skills for tackling the hills in winter. And there is no need to worry about buying expensive kit as it is all included in the cost of the challenge.

After learning these skills you will then attempt to reach the summit of the UK's highest mountain.

- Summit Ben Nevis (1344m), the UK's highest mountain, in winter!
- Learn key winter walking skills including the use of crampons & ice axes
- Two nights' accommodation in beautiful Glen Nevis
- Incredible winter challenge
- View the Scottish Highlands covered in snow!

YOUR CHALLENGE DAY BY DAY

DAY 1 Fri 24 Mar

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Arrival and welcome/safety briefing

You will need to arrive at the accommodation in Glen Nevis by 8pm to meet the rest of the team and take part in the important safety briefing from your leaders. We will also be sorting out all kit hire required for the challenge on this evening so that we can make a prompt start on the following morning.

Dinner is not included.

DAY 2 Sat 25 Mar

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Winter skills training

After a hearty breakfast you will then have an introductory talk about safety on the hills in winter, and the key principles of winter walking. Following this introductory talk we will head out onto the hills to begin practicing the key skills that you will need to learn to attempt the summit bid the following day. These skills will include kicking steps, using crampons and ice axes, and practicing ice axe arrests.

In order to guarantee the best snow conditions, and to maximise your time learning these skills, we aim to conduct this skills training on the north slopes of Aonach Mor. We will take the gondola up to the snow line. The gondola ticket is included in your challenge cost. Please note that the precise hills we will use for this skills day is governed by weather conditions.

After a day of learning these skills we will return to the hostel for dinner. After dinner there will be a further talk from the leaders to consolidate our learning.

(B, L, D)

DAY 3 Sun 26 Mar

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The summit day!

Today is when we put all of our new skills to use as we set out for the summit. Ahead of us is 14km of tough winter walking as we ascend up the Pony Track, along the famous 'zig-zags' before heading out across the plateau to the summit. All the while we will be putting into practice our skills, using crampons and kicking steps where necessary. After celebrating at the summit we will descend back to the hostel where it will be time to depart.

(B, L)

NB

Please note: Charity Challenge reserve the right to make any amendments necessary to this itinerary.

We will aim to complete this challenge by 4-5pm. However, delays can happen, so please make sure you have flexible onward travel plans. The timings offered in this itinerary are offered as a guide only. Precise timings during the challenge may vary depending upon things such as weather, groups ability etc.

NB: B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner

HOW TO FUND YOUR CHALLENGE

This page provides you details of the costs of your challenge.
The costs below are per person.

SELF FUNDER

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*Pay a registration fee of £95.00 when you book
Then a balance of £300.00
(9 weeks before your challenge)
Raise as much as you can for your charity.*

MINIMUM SPONSORSHIP

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*Registration fee of £95.00 when you book
Raise a minimum of £625.00 for your charity.*

WHAT'S INCLUDED

Before you go

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- 12.5% off Cotswold Outdoor, Snow + Rock, and Runners Need
- Fundraising advice
- A-Z of fundraising ideas
- Support materials (itinerary, kit list, fact file, Q&As, health notes, travel tips, responsible travel policy and guidance)
- Risk assessment and emergency management planning

On your challenge

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- Three meals a day (unless otherwise stated in the itinerary)
- Celebratory drink and medal at the finish!
- Fully qualified Winter Mountain Leaders
- Climbing equipment (crampons and ice axe)
- Packed lunch and drinks
- 2 nights accommodation during the challenge (usually same-sex dormitories)

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

Before you go

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- Any covid tests required for entry to any countries or places of interest on your challenge itinerary
- Clothing and equipment listed on your Kit List

On your challenge

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- Winter walking boots (Compatible with a C1 crampon)

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 11 weeks before departure (by 06/01/2023), and the remaining 20% within 4 weeks of completing the challenge (by 23/04/2023). 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.

Typical group size

The typical group size is 10 - 30 participants

Why book with Charity Challenge

- The very best winter leaders to instruct you in all the skills you will need
- Crampon and ice axe hire included in the cost
- Gondola ticket included for the skills training day
- Two nights accommodation in the heart of the Scottish Highlands
- The very highest quality Winter Ben Nevis Challenge on the market!

Level of difficulty

The Winter Ben Nevis Challenge is graded as **extreme**. This is the perfect challenge for participants who are of an adventurous spirit and an open mind, who have taken part in other trekking challenges and now wish to test themselves in a more extreme environment.

We would recommend that all participants are comfortable summer hill walkers who wish to test themselves in more challenging conditions.

You can tell your supporters that on your Winter Ben Nevis Challenge you will be:

- Summiting the highest mountain in the UK, under winter conditions.
- Learning key winter skills for reaching the summit.
- Trekking for between 8-10 hours on summit day

Training

The Winter Ben Nevis Challenge is a long, sustained weekend event of up to 10 hours per day and covering varied terrain. Therefore, it requires a good level of fitness. Winter walking in particular is a more demanding undertaking as walking through snow is much harder than walking along footpaths in the summer. The ideal training for this challenge is, naturally, walking along similar terrain.

However, if you do not have the luxury of living near the great outdoors, then the gym or walking in your local area are good places to start. Most training should be part of an ongoing lifestyle, but if this is not the case then you should begin training 4-6 months prior to the challenge and gradually build up. Remember to use the clothes, equipment and especially the shoes that you will be wearing on the challenge in order to get them worn in. The more you exercise before the challenge, the more you will get out of it. Also see your Charity Challenge Fitness Training notes.

Group size

Our minimum group size is 20 and groups are typically made up of between 20-40 people. There will be one challenge leader for approximately every 10-15 participants.

On occasion, we may be able to run a challenge with less than 20 people. This may incur a small group supplement. If this happens, it will be communicated before your invoice or fundraising deadline.

Group Management

All Charity Challenge winter events are led by fully qualified Winter Mountain Leaders and operated as a team challenge. You will be accompanied by our fully qualified Winter Mountain Leaders at all times. These leaders will navigate the route so you can conserve all of your energy for completing the challenge.

Your leaders are extremely experienced, and many of them have worked overseas with Charity Challenge. They are there primarily for your safety so please respect any decisions they make during the course of your challenge. Your leaders will be ultimately responsible for the running of the itinerary and the safety of your group. All of our leaders are there to ensure that everyone has the best opportunity to complete the challenge. They will be carrying full safety equipment and mountain first aid kits with them at all times.

We encourage all participants to work together to complete the challenge. We believe that your experience is always enhanced by taking time to talk to your fellow challenger's and learn about their inspiring stories. Our challenges are not designed as a race.

It is extremely important on winter challenges that the group moves together at all times. Unlike summer conditions, the difficult nature of the winter conditions means that it is necessary to keep everyone close together as soon as we reach the snow line. It is important that everyone agrees to this way of managing the group.

Weather

This is a winter challenge, so please come expecting snow and associated winter conditions. The temperature on the summit is very likely to be below freezing and you should ensure you have suitable clothing. In winter conditions it is also important that you have spare items such as gloves and hats.

What happens if bad weather means we are unable to complete the planned itinerary?

The nature of winter conditions means that it may not be able to complete the itinerary as planned. Our leaders

will pay close attention to the weather conditions in the weeks leading up to the challenge. They will also be paying very close attention to the avalanche forecast.

We will always do everything we can to operate the stated itinerary. However, it may on occasion be necessary to amend the itinerary. If this is required, then an alternative route may be planned. For example, on this challenge it may be necessary for us to cancel the planned ascent of the summit of Ben Nevis and offer an alternative lower level walk.

As this is a winter challenge, Charity Challenge can make no guarantee over winter conditions and cannot guarantee that you will be able to summit Ben Nevis.

Terrain

The terrain on the Winter Ben Nevis Challenge is on good quality footpaths. However, in winter conditions footpaths can often be unrecognisable and so you should be prepared for a remote walking experience. Footpaths can often be icy at lower levels.

Challenge timings

Please note: Precise details and timings will be made available in your Final Details that are sent out 1 month prior to the challenge.

You will need to be at the accommodation by 8pm on the day of arrival.

On each of the challenge days you can expect an early breakfast. On the 'skills day you can expect to be out on the hill by 9-10am and return to the hostel by 4-5pm.

On the 'summit day' we will aim to begin the trek at 7am. We anticipated being finished by 3-4pm.

Please note: Whilst we shall do all we can to stick to this finish time, please make sure you book flexible return tickets as delays can happen and we cannot guarantee a precise finishing time or be held responsible for any missed transport.

Getting to and from the challenge

Please note: Precise details and timings will be made available in your Final Details that are sent out 1 month prior to the challenge. We reserve the right to use alternative accommodation when necessary.

The accommodation for this challenge is likely to be in the SYHA Glen Nevis (this will be confirmed one month prior to the challenge). This hostel is located 5 minutes from Fort William and can be reached by public bus or taxi.

Parking at the hostel is limited.

Fort William is well served by trains from Glasgow.

Inverness is the closest airport. It is 1.5 hours from Inverness to Fort William.

Accommodation

2 nights hostel style accommodation is included in the challenge cost. Accommodation is in same-sex dormitory style accommodation with shared bathroom facilities. We will confirm the accommodation one month prior to the challenge. Our normal accommodation provider is the SYHA Glen Nevis.

Food and drink

The following meals are included in the cost of this challenge:

- Breakfast at the hostel on days 2 and 3
- A packed lunch will be available to you each day
- Dinner at the hostel will be provided on the second day of the itinerary

We would advise that everyone also bring some of their own snacks to keep them going during the day.

Clothing and equipment

Equipment of good quality and durability could make the difference between a fantastic challenge experience and an uncomfortable one. Because this challenge takes place in winter it is extremely important that you pay close attention to the kit list and that you bring with you everything marked as essential. A full kit check will be performed by your challenge leaders, and anyone without key pieces of kit may not be able to take part in the challenge.

Winter kit hire

Included in your challenge costs will be the hire of crampons and an ice axe. In order for us to provide you with the correctly sized equipment please ensure that you complete your height and shoe size when registering for the challenge.

Boot hire

You should pay particular attention to the correct boots for this challenge. Boots for winter need to be waterproof

and also stiff enough to be able to enable you to use a crampon. Many summer walking boots are not suitable for using crampons.

Please read our advice about what boots are suitable carefully. If you need to hire boots for this challenge then please place this hire via the 'kit hire' form that will be sent to you one month prior to the challenge. Boots cost £40 to hire for the weekend and can be paid for upon arrival at the challenge.

A full kit list for this challenge can be found [here](#).

Once you book you will have access to kit discounts with our partners OutdoorHire and Cotswold Outdoor.

How to tell if your walking boots are suitable for winter walking

If this is the first time that you have done any winter walking then the most important thing to consider will be whether your boots are suitable for walking on the hills in winter conditions. This can be a very confusing issue, and you will come across lots of things like B1, B2 or B3 and C1 crampon compatible! Please don't worry about this.

In simple terms, you will require a B2 boot. We will be providing everyone with C1 crampons so you will be required to have a boot that is compatible with a C1 crampon.

When using crampons it is extremely important that your boots have very little flex, and that the boot is very rigid. This is the opposite of what most people desire in a good, lightweight summer boot where you want your boots to have some flex to increase their comfort.

The following points should help you to decide if your current boots are suitable:

1. Check the stiffness of the sole - hold the heel and toe of one of your boots, then try and push the heel to the toe. If the sole of your shoe can flex when doing this test then your boots are not suitable for winter walking. If you can flex your boots a small amount (approximately 1-2cm of flex) then your boots are probably 3-4 season boots (B1). If there is practically no movement, then your boots will be 4-season (B2 or B3).
2. Check how rugged the boot looks. A winter boot has a much more rugged and stiff appearance to a normal summer walking boot. For an example of a classic 'rugged' winter boot please click [here](#).
3. If you know the brand and model of your current boot then check online to see what it's designed for. Most retailers websites will state if the boot is designed for winter use and is either B1, B2 or B3.

If you have any questions about your boots suitability then please email a photo of your current boots to challenges@charitychallenge.com for advice.

If you do not already own a pair of winter boots, then we would recommend that you consider hiring a pair. Details of 'boot hire' will be available with your Final Details, one month prior to the challenge.

Toilets

There will be no toilets when out on the hill. All toilet opportunities will be in the great outdoors!

Money

During the challenge, there are limited opportunities to spend any money. We would advise you should need no more than £20.00, excluding your joining and returning home travel costs.

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 few important points that you should be aware of:

- Winter hill walking is a fantastic experience but has increased risks compared to summer walking. It is important that you listen to the challenge leaders at all times.
- Winter conditions can be extreme, please make sure you have all equipment listed as essential on your kit list.
- The summit plateau on Ben Nevis can be a challenging navigational area, particularly in winter. Stay close to your leaders at all stages of the challenge.

Emergencies

Your leading team are trained to deal with emergency situations in remote areas and will be carrying a mobile phone and radios 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 the planned time frame.

Pre-Existing Medical Conditions

We do not professionally vet your medical details. Please assess for yourself whether you are fit and able to take on the challenge. Please review the detailed Trip Notes and itinerary to get a better idea of what is involved. Please speak to your doctor or specialist if you have any concerns about taking part. If you think that there are things we can do to make the challenge more accessible/comfortable for you, it is your responsibility to let us know, and we will then let you know if we can accommodate your request.

Medical Support

First Aid qualified staff will be provided with the medical details that you give on your booking form but please note that they are on the challenge to support with medical matters related to the challenge environment and terrain itself, i.e. heat/cold and so on. They will deal with any incidents and accidents (cuts, sprains, breaks and so on). They are not intended to continue any ongoing specialist medical care that you receive in the UK for pre-existing medical conditions, and should not be assumed to have any professional experience of your specific medical condition.

If you have any specific needs around pre-existing medical conditions, you should discuss these with your family doctor or specialist in advance and then discuss any advice given by them with the challenge leader.

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. You can see our cancellation policy within our terms and conditions [here](#). If you wish, you could look into your own policy that covers cancellation for travel within the UK.

Responsible Tourism

Charity Challenge believes that all of its challenges, whether in the UK or overseas, should have a positive impact on the communities we visit.

In the UK we would encourage all participants to consider booking an additional night's accommodation in the area they are visiting so that they can fully enjoy their challenge experience. Many of our challenges are set in beautiful areas of the UK so why not turn your challenge into a weekend away and go out for a celebration meal in a local pub or restaurant.

For more details about our responsible tourism policy then please click [here](#).

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Any more questions?

Contact us:

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