CH>RITY
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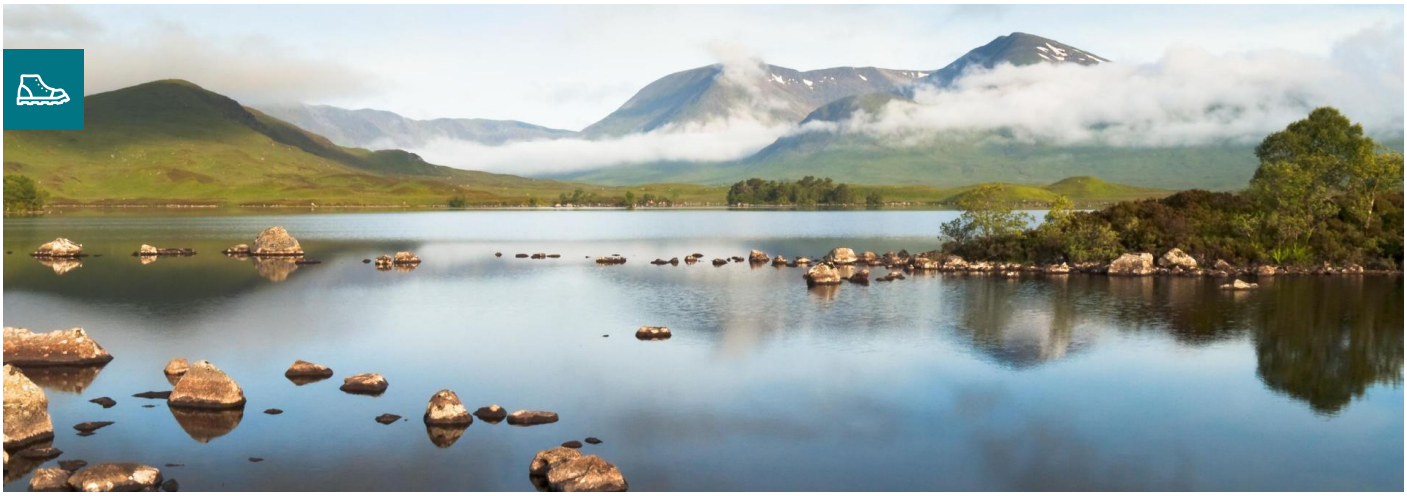
TRIP NOTES

BELIEVE ACHIEVE INSPIRE

WEST HIGHLAND WAY CHALLENGE UK

Sat 23 Sep - Sun 01 Oct 2023



In aid of your choice of charity

23 Sep - 01 Oct 2023

9 DAYS | UK | TOUGH

The West Highland Way is one of the UK's most popular long distance trekking routes. Charity Challenge have created this incredible, fully supported multi-day trekking challenge that will see you complete the entire 154km through the spectacular landscape of the Scottish Highlands.

Beginning just outside Glasgow there are seven tough days of trekking before you get to celebrate your accomplishments at Fort William, the foot of Ben Nevis. Capture amazing photographs of the West Highland Way's finest scenery including Loch Lomond, Rannoch Moor and Glencoe. With fully qualified mountain leaders, a fantastic camp crew and full luggage transfers you'll have all the support you need to complete this incredible challenge.

- Complete Scotland's most popular long-distance trail – The West Highland Way
- Immerse yourself in the breath-taking scenery of the Scottish Highlands
- Camp and trek 154km (96 miles) from Milngavie (Glasgow) to Fort William
- Experience the beautiful landscapes of Loch Lomond, Rannoch Moor, and Glencoe
- Celebrate seven days trekking as you reach Fort William, at the foot of Ben Nevis

YOUR CHALLENGE DAY BY DAY

DAY 1 *Sat 23 Sep*

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Arrival at accommodation near Glasgow (3* Hotel)

Tonight you will arrive at your accommodation in Milngavie, just outside Glasgow and will have the opportunity to meet the rest of the team of trekkers. After settling in to the accommodation you will then get to meet all of the challenge leaders and support team at the all important welcome and safety briefing. This will be where your leaders explain everything you need to know about the days ahead, including what to take with you on the trek each day and what to put in your luggage that will meet you each night at camp. It will also be your opportunity to ask any questions and get to know the team. It will then be early to bed, excited about the adventure ahead.
Accommodation: 3* hotel, twin share
Meals: Dinner

DAY 2 *Sun 24 Sep*

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Milngavie to Drymen (Approx 19km, 255m of ascent)

After a hearty breakfast it will be time to put on our hiking boots and hit the trail! The first day of the trek is designed to be an easier introduction to the challenge, allowing our bodies to get used to carrying bags and our muscles to get used to the stresses and trained strains of walking for a full day. The route begins along beautiful rivers and fields before we pass by our first truly Scottish sight, Glengoyne Distillery! After 12 miles we will arrive at the campsite in Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park with plenty of time to relax before our first night of camping.
Accommodation: Camping
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 3 *Mon 25 Sep*

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Drymen to Rowardennan (Approx 22.5km, 450m of ascent)

Today marks our first test of going uphill as we depart Drymen and ascend Conic Hill for breathtaking views across the world famous Loch Lomond and the chain of islands that mark the highland boundary fault, the true indicator that we are entering the Scottish Highlands. From here we begin heading north and descend along the loch, to our campsite near the small settlement of Rowardennan, sleeping under the towering summit of Ben Lomond above us.
Accommodation: Camping
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 4 *Tue 26 Sep*

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Rowardennan to Inveraman (Approx 22.5km, 470m of ascent)

We will soon begin to understand the sheer scale of the Scottish landscape as we spend the entire day trekking along the beautiful, secluded wooded paths along Loch Lomond. This section is our first taste of the remoteness of the Highlands, but the day will still be filled with stunning waterfalls, and hopefully our first chance to see some birds of prey, the Golden Eagle and the Osprey, as we pass through Inversnaid RSPB reserve. Our campsite tonight is at the top of Loch Lomond and offers everyone the opportunity to enjoy some Highland hospitality at the famous Drover's Inn.

Accommodation: Camping

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 5 *Wed 27 Sep*

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Inveraman to Tyndrum (Approx 19.3kms, 490m of ascent)

Following the River Falloch today you will catch glimpses of the cascades of the Falls of Falloch and will start to experience the soaring mountains of the Highlands. We will be passing at the foot of several of the famous Scottish 'Munro's' (the name given to a list of all mountains above 3,000ft in Scotland). Our path skirts the village of Crainlarich before passing the ruins of St Fillan's Priory and arriving into Tyndrum where we will spend the night.
Accommodation: Camping
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 6 *Thu 28 Sep*

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Tyndrum to Glencoe Ski Centre (Approx 28.1kms, 560m of ascent)

As we leave Tyndrum behind us we set off for 2 days away from any settlements as we cross inhospitable Rannoch Moor. The first part of today follows the West Highland railway line and allows us to appreciate the incredible engineering of this remote train route that winds its way through the mountains. As we head towards Bridge of Orchy we will be walking directly towards the towering, pyramidal peaks of Beinn Dorain. Soon we pass on to Rannoch Moor and the long section that follows the old military road over the most remote and wild section of the entire route. Our day will culminate with incredible views of Buchaille Etive Mor (The Great herdsman of Etive), probably the most photographed mountain in Scotland, showcased recently in the James Bond Film Skyfall.
This point indicates that we have reached the edge of Glencoe. Our campsite for the night will allow us to enjoy the spectacular evening light of this most stunning of mountain areas.
Accommodation: Camping
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 7 *Fri 29 Sep*

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Glencoe Ski Centre to Kinlochleven (Aprrox 14.5km, 430m of ascent)

Our route on our penultimate day see's us heading towards Glencoe before turning north and ascending 'the devil's staircase' to the highest point of the entire trek at 550m. From here we will have spectacular views back to 'the Buchaille' and over the range of mountains known as the Mamores. After this tough ascent our path winds its way through remote hills before a long slow descent into the village of Kinlochleven where we will camp for the night. The village is well supplied with shops and pubs and will offer us the opportunity to resupply and enjoy some local refreshments.
Accommodation: Camping
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 8 *Sat 30 Sep*

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Kinlochleven to Fort William (Approx 24km, 615m of ascent)

Our final day is here, but before we can celebrate we are faced with possibly the most demanding day of the whole trek. We begin with a steep ascent out of Kinlochleven, skirting the foot of the Mamore mountains before we round

these mountains and are hopefully met with fantastic views across to Ben Nevis, the highest mountain in Scotland. The final stretch of our route sees us descend through the forestry plantation before making our way along Glen Nevis to reach the town of Fort William, our finish point! After celebrating at the finishing marker we will then check in to our hotel and have the chance to refresh before our celebration meal. Congratulations, you've done it! You've walked the West Highland Way!
Accommodation: 3* Hotel, twin share
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 9 *Sun 01 Oct*

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Departure to Glasgow

After a relaxing breakfast you are free to depart. The train station is in the centre of Fort William and offers a spectacular journey home taking in many of the incredible sights we will have just walked past.
We would recommend that everyone consider spending a few extra days in the area to fully enjoy your experience. Fort William is an excellent base for steam journeys over the famous Glenfinnan viaduct, climbing Ben Nevis 1345m (should you have the energy!) or just enjoying the highland Highland hospitality.

NB

Please note: Charity Challenge reserve the right to make any amendments necessary to this itinerary. All campsites are liable to change depending upon availability and group size. On occasions it is necessary for us to use a short bus transfer to take you from the end of the trek to the campsite. 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.

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 £195.00 when you book
Then a balance of £1062.00 (9 weeks before your challenge)
Raise as much as you can for your charity.

MINIMUM SPONSORSHIP

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Registration fee of £195.00 when you book
Raise a minimum of £2165.00 for your charity.

FLEXI

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Registration fee of £195.00 when you book
Then £195.00 towards challenge costs (9 weeks before your challenge)
Raise a minimum of £1750.00 for your charity.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

Before you go

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- Members only benefits and discounts at a wide range of clothing and equipment suppliers including Outdoorhire, Cotswold Outdoor, Runners Needs, Snow + Rock, Water to Go, The Altitude Centre, Sporttape and Nomad & MASTA.
- Fundraising advice
- Support materials (itinerary, kit list, fact file, Q&As, health notes, travel tips, responsible travel policy and guidance)
- 16 and 20 week trek/bike training schedule
- Fitness training notes
- A-Z of fundraising ideas
- Access to your own password protected account including support materials and training schedules

On your challenge

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

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
- Travel to and from the challenge start/finish point
- Clothing and equipment listed on your Kit List

On your challenge

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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 08/07/2023), and the remaining 20% within 4 weeks of completing the challenge (by 29/10/2023). 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 20 - 30 participants
Small group supplement	The costs and sponsorship levels on our website are based on a minimum of 20 participants. We can run this trip with 10-19 people, but there will be a small group supplement of £100. This is payable by you if you book as a Self Funder or your charity under the Minimum Sponsorship or Flexi payment option if you have raised the necessary minimum fundraising target. For Self Funders, we will notify you 12 weeks before departure if this is necessary, and it will be added to your final balance of challenge costs invoice.
Optional extras	Travel insurance (*subject to availability)

Why book with Charity Challenge?

- Fully supported multi-day UK challenge
- Learn all about the local history and environment along the route with our highly experienced, knowledgeable and fully qualified Mountain Leaders
- Breakfast, packed lunches, dinner, & drinks included
- Campsite crew to set-up tents and ensure you are well fed
- Baggage transfer between each campsite
- Celebratory drink, meal and medal at the end of the challenge
- The same high-quality Charity Challenge experience that you would associate on our international challenges, but in the UK!

Level of difficulty

This challenge is graded as **extreme**. This is perfect for adventurous types who have previous experience of multi-day trekking challenges within the UK, and who are looking for their next challenge.

The West Highland Way Challenge involves seven days of anywhere between 5 to 8 hours of trekking. It involves requires a good level of fitness, and the endurance to do multiple days of consecutive trekking. The terrain follows a good quality footpath throughout, but this can be rocky and muddy in places. There are several remote sections away from support vehicles, however many of the trekking days provide us with good access to offer additional vehicle support should it be needed.

Training

This is a tough, multi-day, endurance challenge that requires everyone to have taken their training seriously. It 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 hilly 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 four months prior to the challenge and gradually build up as suggested. Remember to use the kit that you will be using on the challenge (boots, rucksack, poles etc) in order to get them worn in.

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. The more you exercise before the challenge, the more you will get out of it.

The West Highland Way 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 overnight. We would recommend that all people training towards a West Highland Way Challenge should aim to be able to comfortably do two long days of walking (6-8 hours) on back to back days.

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.

Please note: We can run this challenge for a group size of 10-19 people, but there would be a Small Group Supplement of £100.

Group Management

This is a leader-led challenge and you will be accompanied by our challenge mountain leaders at all times. Whilst we appreciate that the West Highland Way is a well-marked trail, our itinerary is designed to be fully-supported and so you will be accompanied by our leaders at all time. Our leaders are there to assist you and to ensure that everyone can complete the challenge and have a great time.

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 challenges 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 always ask all of our participants to respect any decision that one of leaders has to make.

Like all of our challenges, we manage the trek as a team challenge, and we encourage everyone to see themselves as part of a team. Our aim is to walk at a speed that is appropriate for all group members. It is important to remember that this is a multi-day trekking itinerary, and so we will walk at a pace that is appropriate to keep you going for all seven days of walking. Your challenge leaders are very experienced at setting the correct pace, and they will be with you at all times.

Should it be necessary for the group to split into different walking speeds during the day then your challenge leaders will facilitate this. However, a challenge leader must be with you at all times.

Should anyone develop any problems during the day then the leaders will be in touch with the support vehicle at all times and will be able to arrange for the vehicle to come and assist.

Weather

The Scottish weather can be extremely variable, even during the summer, so please read your kit list carefully and make sure that you bring all essential kit.

Terrain

The West Highland Way follows a good quality footpath throughout. However, this footpath can be rocky and muddy in places. There are several sections where there are short but sharp sections of ascent or descent. However, none of these sections are sustained for more than an hour.

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.

On the day of arrival you should plan to arrive at your accommodation for 5pm. Dinner is generally at around 6pm, with the welcome and safety briefing taking place immediately after dinner. On the day of departure you are free to depart at any time. Breakfast is included, and check-out is generally at 10am.

On each day of the trek you can expect to start each day with breakfast at 7am, with the aim being to start trekking by 8am. We aim to finish each day by 3-4pm. However, these timings will be adjusted according to weather forecasts, the group's ability etc.

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.

The challenge starts in the town of Milngavie, just north of Glasgow. You should plan to make your way to Glasgow for 5pm on the day of arrival. At one month prior to the challenge you will be provided with the precise details of the accommodation, but we will always make sure that it is easily accessed from central Glasgow.

Glasgow has excellent transport links with the rest of the UK. Glasgow airport is a short 20 minute bus journey from the city centre, and the two main train stations are both located very centrally.

Your challenge finishes in Fort William. Transport back to Glasgow is not included in the cost of the challenge as we appreciate that many people will want to make onward travel plans themselves. There is an excellent train and bus service between Fort William that runs regularly. On the day of departure you are free to leave at any time.

Please note: Whilst we shall do all we can to stick to this the proposed 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.

Accommodation

Accommodation on the first and last night of the challenge is in a 3* hotel and is on a twin share basis. During the challenge accommodation is camping. You will be provided with a 3 man tent for 2 people to share, so there is plenty of space in each tent.

We are unable to offer single supplements on this challenge.

Food and drink

All food and drink is included for you from dinner on the first night through to breakfast on the final morning. During the trek, breakfast and dinner will be provided for you at the campsite each morning. Breakfast will be consist of a hearty meal of porridge, cereal, fruit and hot drinks. Dinner will be a mixture of good, hearty, trekking food. Soups, pasta, rice, different sauces, stews and a dessert will be provided each day.

A packed lunch and drinking water will be provided for each day. To allow people to choose their own packed lunch we will provide bread and a variety of sandwich fillings so that people can make their own sandwich each morning after breakfast. Crisps, fruit and snack bars will also be available for you to carry with your packed lunch. You will be required to carry your packed lunch with you every day. We can easily cater for most dietary requirements. Please indicate your dietary requirements on your booking form. If you have any concerns about this then please don't hesitate to contact us.

Clothing and equipment

During this challenge you will need to have two bags. One day pack that you use to carry everything you need for the

day of trekking, and one kit bag that contains all of your camping equipment and spare clothes. This kit bag is transferred between each campsite for you.

What to carry during the day

This challenge takes place in a remote and mountainous environment, away from roads and immediate access to vehicle evacuation support. It is therefore extremely important that you come prepared with the correct kit for this challenge. Please ensure that your waterproof jacket is able to keep you dry when subjected to rain for several hours at a time, and that you also have waterproof trousers as legs get just as wet as tops. Footwear should also be waterproof and most importantly should have good grip. Sports trainers are not appropriate for the terrain of this challenge. We also ask you to ensure that you bring with you multiple warm layers, along with at least two sets of hat and gloves. If clothes get wet then the only way to dry them is by hanging them up in tents.

Clothing and equipment for the campsite

We recommend that you have at least one dry set of clothes that you can change into when you reach the campsite. This will ensure that you always have a dry set of clothes at the end of the day.

Tents are provided for you, but you will need to bring your own sleeping mats and sleeping bags as they are not supplied. Please refer to the kit list for more information about what is appropriate.

Surviving the Scottish midge

The Scottish midge can be a problem, especially at campsites. Please make sure that you bring with you a midge head-net and midge repellent cream or spray.

The full kit list for this challenge can be viewed here.

Please be aware that because of the environment that this challenge takes place in our leaders may ask to see the vital parts of your kit. Participants found without kit marked on the kit list will not be allowed to take part in the challenge.

Toilets

During the days of trekking, toilet facilities are limited to the great outdoors. Your leaders will be able to give you advice on the appropriate toilet etiquette for each day. Campsites have toilet blocks and washing facilities. Some campsites have showers that can be paid for. We always try to ensure that all of our campsites have toilet facilities, but on occasions this is not possible. In this scenario toilet tents and “long drops” are used.

Money

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

It is a good idea to bring some change, in case the campsites we use charge for showers. Several £1 coins should suffice for this.

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:

- Make sure you have all of the kit listed as essential on the kit list.
- The Scottish weather can be extremely variable, so we recommend that everyone has multiple hats and gloves and warm layers to ensure that they always have a dry item to wear on each day.
- 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.
- Make sure that you take care around the campsite.

Emergencies

Your leadership 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. If we find that you are unable to complete any day of the trek, then we will arrange for you to be collected by the support vehicle and taken to the night's campsite.

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 suffer from a severe allergy, you are required to contact us to discuss any requirements. 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. Whilst we will do our best to put in place appropriate measures we cannot guarantee that this will be possible.

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

Your safety when travelling with Charity Challenge is our main concern, which is why it is a booking condition that you have a suitable travel insurance policy, which covers you for the adventurous nature of your challenge, the activities you are undertaking, and the altitudes. We have chosen to partner with specialist travel insurance providers Campbell Irvine, who offer cover for an extensive number of adventurous activities. Cover is available directly from Campbell Irvine for most European residents and includes cover for emergency medical and repatriation and for your cancellation or curtailment of the challenge. Full details including costs may be found by clicking here.

Any medical emergencies would 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

At Charity Challenge we are committed to sustainable and responsible tourism. On this challenge, we liaise with the local authorities to make sure that we minimise our impact on the local environment.

We believe that acting responsibly should add to your enjoyment of the challenge. Our leaders care passionately for the environment and will be keen to talk to you about how you can do your bit to conserve the local environment and enhance your experience.

We would like to encourage all our participants to spend a little extra time in this beautiful corner of Scotland. Why not consider booking an extra night, and go out for a meal in one of the excellent local pubs after the challenge? Not only will you be able to celebrate your achievements, but you will also be putting more money back into the local economy. For lots of ideas about places to stay and things to do please visit the excellent Visit Scotland website.

For extra information, please visit our Responsible Tourism pages, where you will be able to view a list of the other projects that we currently support.

Booking with confidence

We understand that there may be a little uncertainty around booking in the current climate so we have created a 'Booking With Confidence' policy to help you book your next Charity Challenge with absolute confidence.

Book with the knowledge that:

- We are putting significant measures in place to make your challenge Covid Safe
- We have flexible payment options
- We have ATOL and International Passenger Protection financial cover for your peace of mind*

We will offer you a number of options if we cannot operate your challenge due to Covid-19 :

- postpone your challenge to a later departure
- join any other challenge
- transfer your place to another person
- receive a refund of monies paid for the challenge

Full info and T&C's on our Booking With Confidence policy

Keeping Safe post-Covid

This challenge is planned to start running in 2021 when we hope that we will live in a ‘post-Covid’ world. Please rest assured that Charity Challenge will continue to monitor all of the latest advice from both the government and local authorities and will ensure that all of our safety systems are up to date. Our safety advice for our UK challenge’s

running in the autumn of 2020 can be viewed here. This document will be amended as and when the advice changes

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Any more questions?

Contact us:

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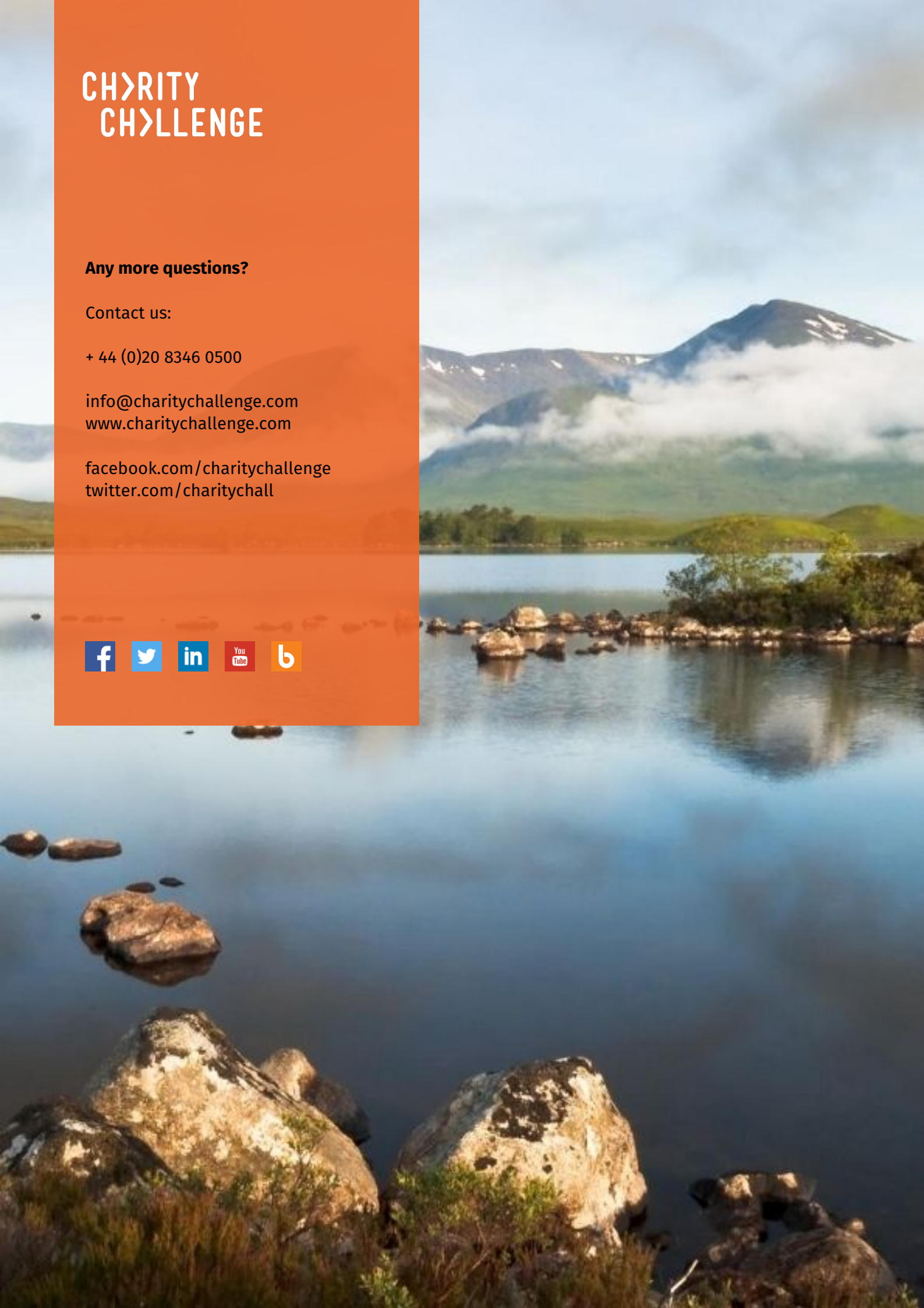
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