



## **New Members Guide to Club Trips**

If you have never been away with the club, it can be a daunting experience with lots of 'first time' questions that you might be wary of asking. We don't want anyone to feel left out, so this document aims to cover everything you need to know to get yourself booked onto a club trip and maximise your enjoyment. We say 'everything' but there is bound to be questions that we haven't thought of, so if in doubt ask.

### **How does it work?**

At the beginning of the year the club publishes its Meets List, spread across various areas of the UK to maximise the variety. Generally trips in the winter months will be arranged for mountainous terrain (Snowdonia, Lakes or Scotland) to maximise the opportunity for members to get out in snow & ice to practice their winter mountaineering skills. Generally we stay in British Mountaineering Council (BMC), Climbers Club (CC) or other club huts. The rest of the year will see the trips arranged under canvas and spread over areas of the UK that offer a mix of outdoor activities, be that walking, cycling, climbing or canoeing in adventurous terrain.

These dates are advertised on the Mountain Club website together with the trip organiser's name. A minimum of four weeks before the trip, details will also be posted of which campsite/hut is being used and expected costs (approx. £5 - £15 per night camping or £7-20 per night in a hut). Each member should then confirm with the organiser their attendance and book their space according to the meet instructions (e.g. for campsites this is usually direct with the site). If a hut is being used then deposits will be taken at this time to confirm attendance and allow us to finalise the hut booking. Details of the meets can also be found on the members-only Facebook page, but please note that contact should be made with the meet organiser, rather than just clicking "attend".

Closer to the event, an email will be circulated asking for confirmation of who is attending, on which days and their travel arrangements. Generally people travel up after work on Friday and return Sunday late afternoon/evening, but many take the opportunity to extend the weekend and take one or both of the days off either side. Many members choose to car share to keep costs to a minimum so please let the organiser know if you are willing to take passengers or would like a lift. Members are expected to make their own arrangements for lifts etc., but the trip organiser will try to offer assistance and co-ordinate as much as possible. If car sharing, the driver will agree the split of the cost with each passenger.

### **What happens when we get there?**

If practical a group booking will have been made at the campsite, so ask the owners where the Mountain Club pitches are so that we can aim to stay together.

If a pub is within walking distance, we normally wander down for a pint or two, or socialise around a campfire to allow us to plan the next day's events.



We want the meets to be as social, inclusive and coordinated as possible so if you have your own plans or would like to be included in other peoples then please do speak up. Experienced members will always try to make sure everyone is involved in the weekend activities. Speaking to the trip organiser is a good way to make sure you're not missing out.

If there are a number of people interested in doing the same thing then a consensus will be gained using the expertise and knowledge in the assembled group. If the weather is not suitable for climbing then if there is a local indoor wall we will usually take that option. If not, or climbing isn't your thing, then we will usually split off into groups depending on what people fancy doing, be that walking in the local area or inspecting the local pubs.

### **What level of experience do I need to have?**

The Mountain Club does not have any qualified instructors and does not operate as a training organisation, therefore any tuition or coaching is done on a 'personal advice' basis rather than an organised activity on behalf of the club. The club was founded to help encourage people to experience everything the outdoors has to offer and therefore every effort will be made to include less experienced members and help them participate fully in any activities. That said all members should be mindful that the more experienced members will also have their own enjoyment at heart and sometimes this will preclude the tuition or accommodation of lesser experienced members (e.g. if their goal was higher grade climbs or walks). In a nutshell, whenever possible, everyone will try to help out and bring on the skills and experience of each other, whilst still achieving what they set out to do.

The Mountain Club is a British Mountaineering Council (BMC) Affiliated club. The BMC recognises that climbing, hill walking and mountaineering are activities with a danger of personal injury or death. Participants in these activities should be aware of and accept these risks and be responsible for their own actions and involvement. Any person participating in any activity under the auspices of The Mountain Club accepts this approach to responsibility and risks. It is the responsibility of each participant to assess the risk of their intended activity, and to decide whether to proceed. Consideration should be given to;

- Personal experience, knowledge and fitness
- Weather, including avalanche risk
- Terrain
- Medical requirements
- Appropriateness of kit

### **What do I need to take?**

Over and above all your normal climbing/walking/biking/canoeing kit, you will need to take all the equipment, food and clothes to be self-sufficient at the venue. If camping; this means tent, sleeping bag and mat, cooking and eating equipment etc. If in a hut or hostel you will only need to take a pillow and sleeping bag as the cooking equipment (utensils, cutlery, plates, cups, pans, cookers etc.) will be in situ and shared with the other residents. Sleeping will typically be in mixed dormitory rooms, often with either bunk or 'alpine' beds – i.e. mattresses on the floor or on a low raised platform. Everything is very informal



operating on a first come, first served basis – just put your stuff on a bed/area of mattress when you arrive. There may be separate gents/ladies toilets and showers, but usually they are unisex.

### **Can I bring guests/my children?**

Members are welcome to bring along guests. We operate a 'member first' basis as much as possible to encourage club membership but are also keen to involve ad hoc attendance. In some of the huts, spaces will be limited and therefore the meet organiser will liaise with the member around available spaces and the practicality of taking guests. To promote membership, guests staying in huts will be asked to contribute an extra £2 per day above the member rate for the hut. That said, in many locations there are camping and B&B options nearby, so even if spaces are limited for guests, they can usually be accommodated. To avoid the requirement for extensive vetting for child protection issues, we follow the BMC guidance on accepting minors (under 16yrs) on to club trips, which is they must be accompanied by their parent/guardian throughout the meet. We would ask all parents/guardians to remember that many members may be taking the opportunity to get away from their own families and therefore we ask that minors are well behaved and as unobtrusive as practical.