Winter Programme

2026- 2027



Feel FALKIRK

falkirkleisureandculture.org

Winter Programme

Welcome

Welcome to our winter adult community programme.
This year we are running single-day outings, linked skills courses as well as exciting trips. We hope we have something for everyone whatever your aspirations and ability.

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FALKIRK COUNCIL

Find us on Falkirk Outdoors

Information and Bookings

Our office hours are:
Tuesday to Thursday 09.00 – 16.00 & Friday 09.00 – 12.30

Outdoor Activities Base
Bothkennar Hub
Main Street
SKINFLATS, FK2 8NU
Tel: 01324 506846
Email: outdooractivities@falkirk.gov.uk
Web: https://www.falkirkleisureandculture.org/fit-and-active/get-outdoors/

For information about any of our winter courses please telephone or email the Outdoor team using the above details.

Bookings can be made online at
https://falkirkcouncil.gladstonego.cloud/book
Select "Outdoor Activities" from the dropdown menu and choose the course you want. You will need to register if you are a new user.

Please read our Terms and Conditions / Participation Statement here:
Terms and Conditions | Falkirk Council
https://www.falkirkleisureandculture.org/fit-and-active/outdoor-activities/terms-and-conditions/

Participants are strongly advised to take out travel insurance to cover the cost of our courses in the event of unforeseen circumstances preventing them attending any course which falls outwith our cancellation period

Equipment

Our modern and comprehensive stores have a full range of equipment for all our courses. The stores will be open on the morning of your course for you to borrow anything you need. All this is **included in the course fee.** Of course you are welcome to use any of your own equipment on our courses if agreed with the instructor on the day.

A winter kit list will be emailed to you on request.

Transport and Venues

All our course start and finish from our main office at Bothkennar Hub and transport to the venue and back is **included in the course fee.** Your vehicle can be left in our car park.

Start times are listed with the course dates and finish times will vary. Please ensure you plan on being out with us all day - if conditions are good we will make the most of them.

Venues are weather-dependent and may be decided on the day of activity.

Outdoors Winter Staff Team



John Jackson

John heads up the Community Programme and is the manager of the Outdoors team. He is a Winter Mountaineering and Climbing Instructor, Mountain Ski Leader and has a host of paddlesports qualifications. He has climbed and skied extensively in the European Alps as well as other mountain areas throughout the world.



Craig McLaren

Craig is a Winter Mountain Leader; he is responsible for planning the High Tops days and trips and delivering our winter skills courses. He has been wandering the Scottish hills in all weathers for well over 40 years. This time in the mountains has allowed him to build up a very good knowledge of the Scottish hills.



Michael Hunt

Mike has an extensive skiing background. He is a BASI 2 instructor and is a Mountain Ski Leader. He immerses himself in all aspects of skiing including telemarking. He is also a Mountain Bike Leader, Winter Mountain Leader and is responsible for coordinating the Outdoors team's delivery of activities for schools.



Martin Holland

Martin has been climbing for well over 40 years. He is a Winter Mountaineering and Climbing Instructor and is a very active all-round climber. His specialty is seeking out esoteric new winter routes, especially in the Southern Highlands.



Euan Whittaker

Euan is a British Mountain Guide. He has been instructing and guiding mountain activities for 30 years. These days, he splits his time between the European Alps, Norway and Scotland delivering courses in alpine mountaineering, rock and ice climbing, off piste skiing and ski touring.

Seasonal Highlights



Glen Affric Trip
Winter Walking or Mountaineering based at Strawberry Cottage

Snowhole Trip
Dig your own snow cave in remote hill country – ski or walk options

Cairngorm Mixed Trip
Early season Winter climbing based in the Cairngorms

Mountain Training Scotland Winter Skills
New comprehensive accredited two day skills course for winter walkers run on behalf of MTS

Mountain Training Scotland

Local Winter Hill Walks

Local Winter Hill Walks

Cost: £40 • Starts at 08:00

These are our easiest hill walking courses. They'll get you on to the hill, hopefully in winter conditions, where you can experience what all the fuss is about regarding Scottish winter hill bagging. We have the equipment if you need it, we transport you to and from the venue, the pace is relaxed, the instructors are experienced and well informed so they will keep you safe and show you any skills you need with unfamiliar kit. We want to support all year round access to the mountains and this could be your ideal starting point.
No previous winter experience necessary but if you've done a hill or two in summer conditions it will make the day more enjoyable.

Beinn Each
7.4km
with 720 metres of ascent

29/01/27 ☐

Ben Ledi
9.5k
with 790 metres of ascent

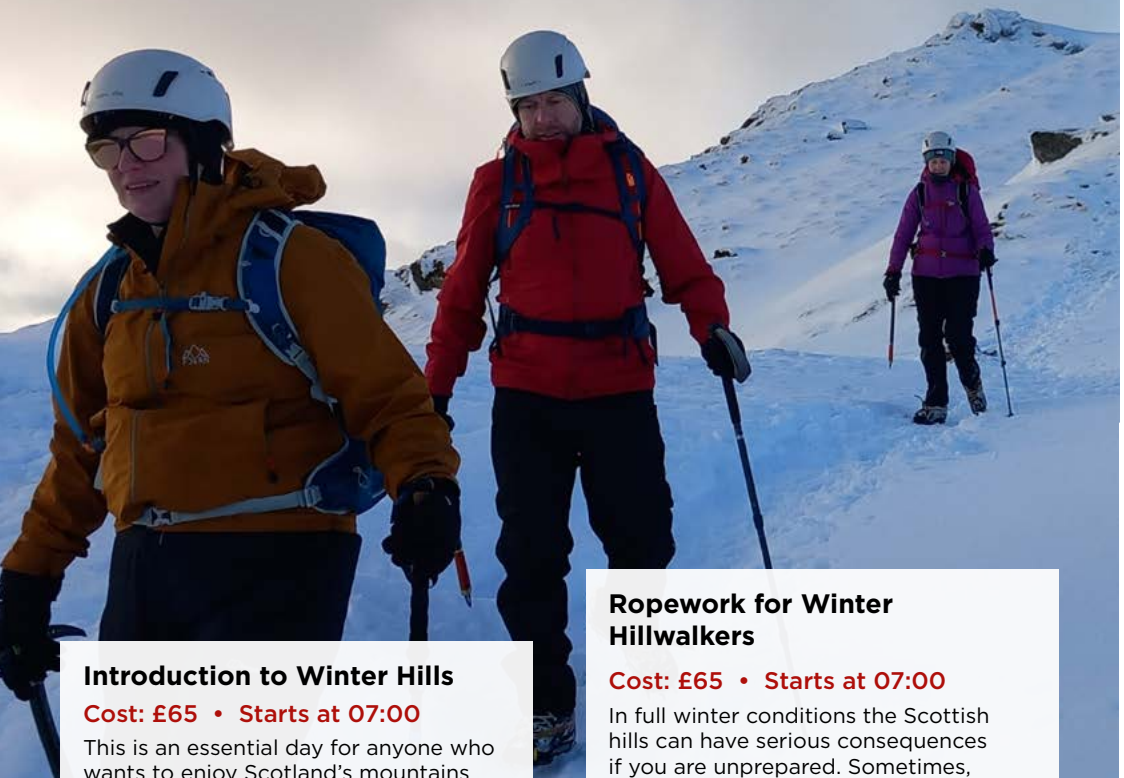
26/02/27 ☐

Ben Vorlich
9.8km
with 880 metres of ascent

26/03/27 ☐

Winter Mountain Skills Courses

With these three courses we hope to give you some of the building blocks that will enable you to enjoy journeying through Scotland's winter environment.



Introduction to Winter Hills

Cost: £65 • Starts at 07:00

This is an essential day for anyone who wants to enjoy Scotland's mountains in winter conditions. This is a full day on the hill and will consist of looking at equipment for winter hill walking and skills such as 'using the boot as a tool', cramponing techniques, walking with an axe and self-arrest.

This course is ideal for those wanting to get out with groups in the winter hills.

- 07/01/27
- 24/01/27
- 13/02/27
- 25/02/27
- 15/03/27

Ropework for Winter Hillwalkers

Cost: £65 • Starts at 07:00

In full winter conditions the Scottish hills can have serious consequences if you are unprepared. Sometimes, taking a rope for unplanned use will be prudent. This course will give a practical introduction for hill walkers using a rope on the hill in winter. Selection of appropriate snow anchors as well as belay and abseil techniques will be covered.

Previous winter hill walking experience or completion of a recent winter skills course is essential

- 25/01/27
- 27/02/27
- 25/03/27

NEW MOUNTAIN TRAINING SCOTLAND

Mountain Training Scotland

Winter Mountain Skills

Cost £140 • Starts 07:00

Our New two-day course aimed at developing your mountain skills.

The Course will cover:

- Winter journey planning
- Avalanche awareness
- Winter equipment and clothing
- Navigation in winter conditions
- Ice axe, crampon and microspike use
- Winter hazards and risk management
- Emergency procedures in mountain environments

This course is suitable for anyone wanting to build confidence in the winter mountain environment.

See our webpage for more information.

- 16/01/27 - 17/01/27
- 01/02/27 - 02/02/27
- 04/03/27 - 05/03/27









Winter High Tops

Winter High Tops

Cost £65 • Starts 07:00 unless otherwise stated

The days will involve a high top - either a Munro or one of our finer Corbetts - so you will need to have previous hill walking experience. If we need to refresh winter skills on the move we will, but if you require more extensive tuition please book on one of our winter skills courses. If these days appear like they'll be a bit much check out our Local Winter Hill Walks instead

Previous winter hill walking experience or completion of a recent winter skills course is essential



Beinn Chaorach & Beinn a' Mhanaich

11.3km with 940 metres of ascent

We kick off our winter walking programme with a grand circuit of two of the Luss Hills Grahams - Beinn Chaorach & Beinn a' Mhanaich. By starting on the A817 and heading to the high ground around the Auchengaich Burn we avoid the long Luss approach and keep to drier ground. The views down to the Clyde lochs are very fine indeed.

12/12/26 ☐

Beinn Mhic Chasgaig

9.8km with 760 metres of ascent

For our midwinter solstice walk we thought we'd revisit atmospheric Glen Etive with this excellent outing on one of the area's best Corbetts – Beinn Mhic Chasgaig. It might be a bit dwarfed by its bigger neighbours, but it packs a mighty punch with steep approaches, spectacular gorges, and a remote air about it, even though it's not far from the road. We might do the usual route, but – it being winter – we might have to vary it a bit.

21/12/26 ☐

Schiehallion Traverse

9.8km with 870 metres of ascent

You've all probably been up Schiehallion, but not many can boast of doing a full traverse of this famous Munro. This walk will go northwest to east from the Dunalastair area, up the northwest ridge to the summit, before joining the usual tourist route down to Braes of Foss - where a cunningly stashed bike will get the instructor quickly back to pick up the minibus.

10/01/27 ☐

Sgorr Gaoith

15km with 950 metres of ascent

From the Feshie side it doesn't look too attractive a prospect, yet this weatherworn Munro in the Cairngorms National Park hides its true nature until one is almost at the summit – then the cliff appears, 2000 feet of it all the way down to lonely Loch Eanaich. A sight to behold at any time of the year, but in winter it is most impressive. Our route goes the standard way up to the plateau but we'll add nearby Sgoran Dubh Mor on so we get longer on the rim and can vary our way back a bit.

21/01/27 ☐

Winter High Tops



Beinn na Lap and Loch Ossian

TRAIN ACCESS

08:00 start

16.5km with 620 metres of ascent

Fancy a wee jaunt to the middle of nowhere? Take in a Munro? Walk around a scenic loch? All from the most remote train station in the land? This outing proposes we do all that by getting to Bridge of Orchy (note the later start to this walk due to train times), jump on the 10:38 train to Corrour (£19 return paid by you), head up Beinn na Lap then – to make things more interesting as well as fill in the time to the return train – traverse the hill down to Corrour Lodge and follow the southern track round Loch Ossian back to the station for the 18:25 back to Bridge of Orchy, where the van awaits to get us back to Falkirk.

04/02/27 ☐

Stob Coire Sgreamhach & Bidean nam Bian

13.6km with 1250 metres of ascent

We advertised this classic Munro pairing last year. It was a well subscribed walk which didn't happen due to stuff, so we thought we'd put it on again (and hope for an uninjured leader this time).

A very fine walk in Glen Coe up the Lairig Eilde onto the mighty Bidean massif and down the spectacular Coire Gabhail – otherwise known as The Lost Valley. Even if you've done these hills before you will appreciate this grand winter outing with a true mountaineering flavour.

02/03/27 ☐

Cruach Innse & Sgurr Innse

13.2km with 880 metres of ascent

Two for the price of one! Double Corbett action on the Braes of Lochaber. Innse means island and it's easy to picture these prominent hills poking out the ice as the latest ice age gave way to Anthropocene. They are steep and rocky, the second one more so, and they will offer fantastic winter sport. Approach is by a long shoogly run up from Spean Bridge, where the Wee Minister awaits as we pass on foot on our way up the Lairig Leacach. Grand views are perhaps left wanting as these hills are dwarfed by their muckle neighbours, but what they lack in height they make up for in character.

18/03/27 ☐

Derry Cairngorm

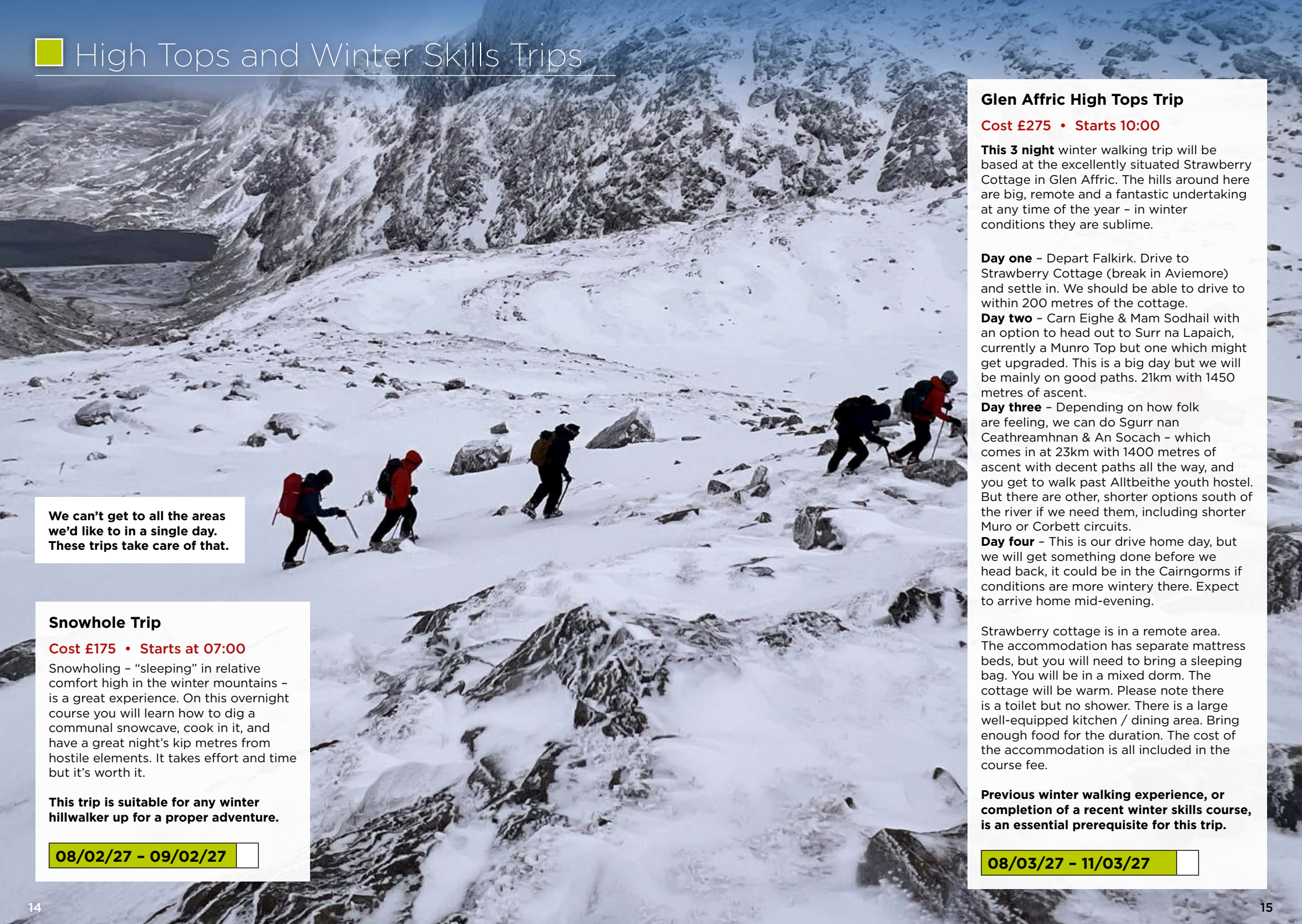
BIKE ACCESS

11.3km with 130 metres of ascent BIKE, 16km with 770 metres of ascent WALK

For the final outing of the winter season we like to go and do something big - like this bike & hike into the Southern Cairngorms to tick Derry Cairngorm. Rather than a simple out and back we will continue down via the famous Hutchie Hut, making a grand tour of the area. From Linn of Dee we bike to Derry Lodge, take the path up to our Munro summit, down to the Etchachan area, then back to the bikes via the Glen. It'll be a fitting finale.

01/04/27 ☐

High Tops and Winter Skills Trips



We can't get to all the areas we'd like to in a single day. These trips take care of that.

Snowhole Trip

Cost £175 • Starts at 07:00

Snowholing – "sleeping" in relative comfort high in the winter mountains – is a great experience. On this overnight course you will learn how to dig a communal snowcave, cook in it, and have a great night's kip metres from hostile elements. It takes effort and time but it's worth it.

This trip is suitable for any winter hillwalker up for a proper adventure.

08/02/27 – 09/02/27

Glen Affric High Tops Trip

Cost £275 • Starts 10:00

This 3 night winter walking trip will be based at the excellently situated Strawberry Cottage in Glen Affric. The hills around here are big, remote and a fantastic undertaking at any time of the year – in winter conditions they are sublime.

Day one – Depart Falkirk. Drive to Strawberry Cottage (break in Aviemore) and settle in. We should be able to drive to within 200 metres of the cottage.
Day two – Carn Eighe & Mam Sodhail with an option to head out to Surr na Lapaich, currently a Munro Top but one which might get upgraded. This is a big day but we will be mainly on good paths. 21km with 1450 metres of ascent.
Day three – Depending on how folk are feeling, we can do Sgurr nan Ceathreamhnan & An Socach – which comes in at 23km with 1400 metres of ascent with decent paths all the way, and you get to walk past Alltbeithe youth hostel. But there are other, shorter options south of the river if we need them, including shorter Muro or Corbett circuits.
Day four – This is our drive home day, but we will get something done before we head back, it could be in the Cairngorms if conditions are more wintery there. Expect to arrive home mid-evening.

Strawberry cottage is in a remote area. The accommodation has separate mattress beds, but you will need to bring a sleeping bag. You will be in a mixed dorm. The cottage will be warm. Please note there is a toilet but no shower. There is a large well-equipped kitchen / dining area. Bring enough food for the duration. The cost of the accommodation is all included in the course fee.

Previous winter walking experience, or completion of a recent winter skills course, is an essential prerequisite for this trip.

08/03/27 – 11/03/27

Winter Mountaineering

Cost £110 • Starts at 07:00

Our mountaineering days will take you along a classic ridge or up a graded gully. The days will normally involve the use of a walking axe - not technical climbing axes; however, the variable nature of the Scottish winter conditions can make a grade I plod highly exciting on the day.

A good level of competence in winter hill walking is required for these days



Curved Ridge Buachaille Etive Mor (Grade II/III)

GLEN ETIVE

We offer a magnificent route up a superlative mountain with this classic winter climb which has a bit of everything: route finding, steep ground and some of the best views over to Rannoch Moor. We finish up on top of the mighty Buachaille Etive Mor.

17/12/26 ☐

Sron na Creise (Grade II)

BLACKMOUNT

This mountaineering route is a fine way up the nose of Creise, offering 400 metres of steep fun. The route has lots of variety, easier or harder linked pitches and fine views over Rannoch Moor.

10/01/27 ☐

Chockstone Gully & North Gully Link Up (Grade II)

ARROCHAR

This is the best mountaineering route up to the summit of The Cobbler's North Summit. Chockstone Gully is steady with the amazing jammed chockstone providing great sport at the end. Great Gully is further up and it continues to provide fine sport, topping out on the summit. If the gullies aren't an option we'll do the Southeast Ridge (Grade 2/3 or III) instead.

07/02/27 ☐

Central Gully Ben Lui (Grade I)

CENTRAL HIGHLANDS

A classic mountaineering outing up one of the biggest snowfields in the Central Highlands and finishing by the summit cairn, Ben Lui's Central Gully is a quality 3 star route. It's either a long walk in or a wade round the back so we plan to take bikes in from Dalrigh if possible.

24/02/27 ☐

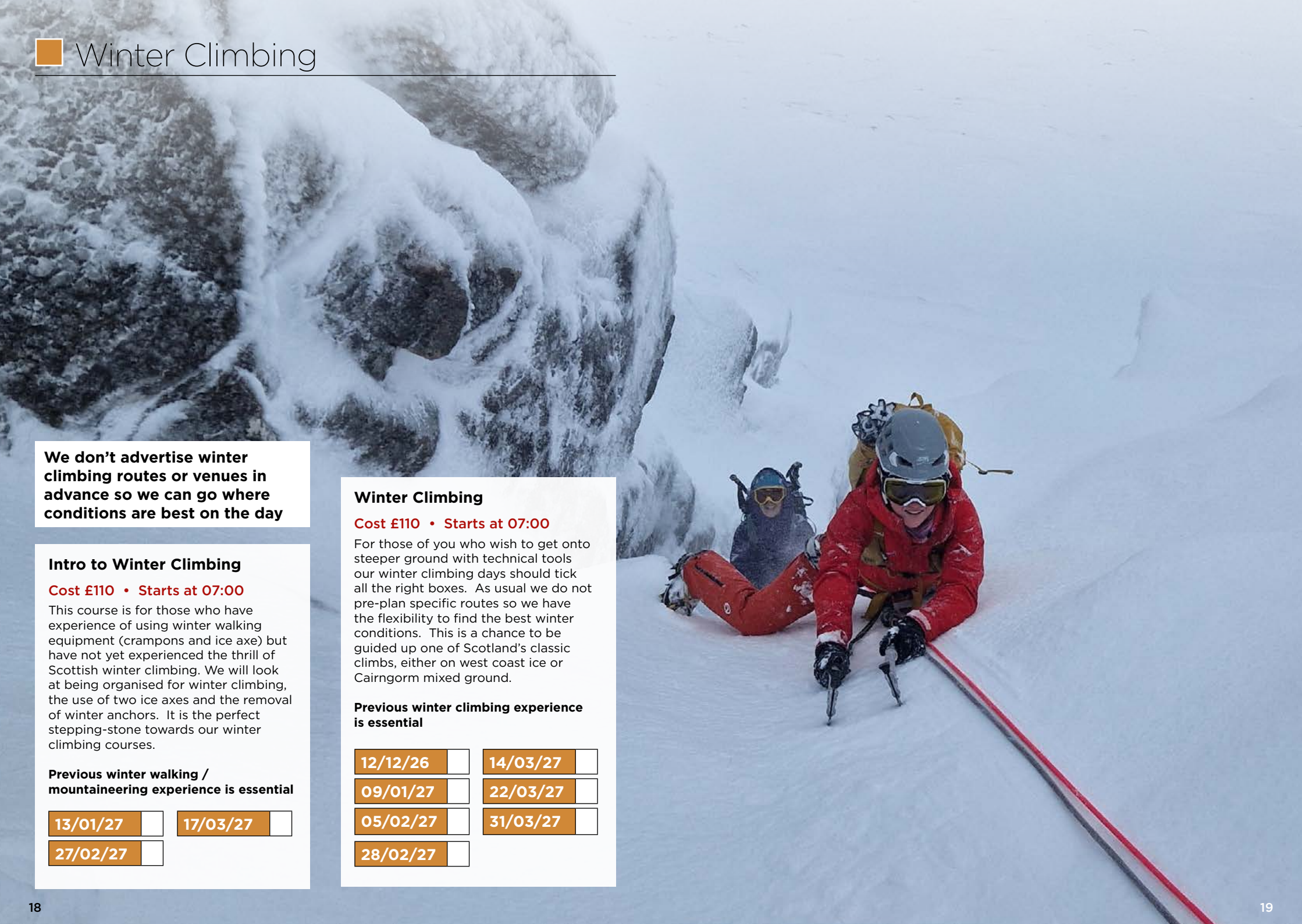
Aonach Eagach Ridge (Grade II/III)

GLEN COE

This outing is popular enough for us to run it at least once a year. It's billed by some as the hardest scramble on the mainland. In winter it becomes a major mountaineering undertaking. Going over both Munros as well as the famous pinnacles, we start at the higher eastern end and then scramble towards the western seaboard.

24/03/27 ☐

Winter Climbing



We don't advertise winter climbing routes or venues in advance so we can go where conditions are best on the day

Intro to Winter Climbing

Cost £110 • Starts at 07:00

This course is for those who have experience of using winter walking equipment (crampons and ice axe) but have not yet experienced the thrill of Scottish winter climbing. We will look at being organised for winter climbing, the use of two ice axes and the removal of winter anchors. It is the perfect stepping-stone towards our winter climbing courses.

Previous winter walking / mountaineering experience is essential

- 13/01/27
- 17/03/27
- 27/02/27

Winter Climbing

Cost £110 • Starts at 07:00

For those of you who wish to get onto steeper ground with technical tools our winter climbing days should tick all the right boxes. As usual we do not pre-plan specific routes so we have the flexibility to find the best winter conditions. This is a chance to be guided up one of Scotland's classic climbs, either on west coast ice or Cairngorm mixed ground.

Previous winter climbing experience is essential

- 12/12/26
- 09/01/27
- 05/02/27
- 28/02/27
- 14/03/27
- 22/03/27
- 31/03/27

Climbing and Mountaineering Trips

We can't get to all the areas we'd like to in a single day. These trips take care of that.

Northern Cairngorm Mixed Winter Climbing Trip

Cost £345 • Starts at 06:00

We plan to head into the Northern Cairngorms area and climb some of the classic mixed winter lines that the area is justly famed for. In the past we've got on The Haston Line (III), Hidden Chimney (III), Aladin's Mirror Direct (IV 4) to name a few of the classics in the area.

The instructor team will be staying in Aviemore youth hostel. Participants need to arrange their own accommodation in the Aviemore area. Transport and any equipment needed are included in the course fee. Participants with alternative travel / accommodation arrangements will need to meet the instructors in Aviemore SYHA or at Cairngorm Mountain car park before each day on the hill.

Previous experience seconding routes at Scottish winter climbing grade III or above and a good level of hill fitness is essential.

27/01/27 - 29/01/27

Northwest Highlands Winter Climbing Trip

Cost £395 • Starts 09:00

Based at the excellent SMC Naismith Hut in Elphin for this trip will allow access to the North-West Highlands with the flexibility to head where the conditions dictate. There is a lot to do in the immediate area as well as more esoteric options depending on conditions. Possibilities could include the nearby sublime Corbett, Quinag, or routes on Stac Pollaidh, Cul Mor or Ben More Assynt. Further afield there are more reliable winter options like An Teallach or Beinn Dearg.

Accommodation in the hut is included in the course fee. Sleeping on alpine bunks so bring your own sleeping bag. See the SMC website for more details of the hut. Please note there are no shops in the area so we need to be self-sufficient for the trip.

Previous experience seconding Scottish winter climbing routes with two axes and a good level of hill fitness is essential.

15/02/27 – 18/02/27

Glen Affric Winter Climbing / Mountaineering Trip

Cost £395 • Starts 10:00

The Glen Affric area offers great winter mountaineering well away from the usual honeypot areas. Sgurr na Lapaich, as well as other options on the Mam Sodhail / Carn Eighe massif. To the south lies a particularly fine winter ridge on Mullach Fraoch Choire. We might head to the Cairngorms on the way home if conditions there are more wintery than locally.

Strawberry cottage is in a remote area. The accommodation has separate mattress beds, but you will need to bring a sleeping bag. You will be in a mixed dorm. The cottage will be warm. Please note there is a toilet but no shower. There is a large well-equipped kitchen / dining area. Bring enough food for the duration. The cost of the accommodation is all included in the course fee.

Previous experience seconding Scottish winter climbing routes with two axes and a good level of hill fitness is essential.

08/03/27 – 11/03/27

Ski Touring Courses

All ski equipment (skis, boots, poles etc.) and safety equipment is available for clients and is included in the course fee, however you are welcome to bring your own.

All our Ski days are guided by a British Mountain Guide or Mountain ski Instructor



Ski touring

Intro to Ski Touring

Cost £95 • Starts at 07:00

The course is aimed at those who have on-piste experience but wish to move to the backcountry! The day will have an emphasis on skill acquisition, and this will be delivered whilst in the context of a simple ski tour. Typical venues for these days include Geal Charn in the Drummochter Pass or the Lawers range above Loch Tay. During the day topics covered will include equipment familiarisation and use, ascending techniques (including the use of skins, heal risers and ski crampons), efficient travel, safe travel, and basic avalanche search and rescue techniques using transceiver, shovel and probe.

This course provides excellent preparation for our guided ski touring days. Ski ability – confident descending red runs on pisted slopes

06/01/27	23/02/27
16/01/27	06/03/27
20/01/27	12/03/27
30/01/27	16/03/27

Guided Ski Touring

Cost £95 • Starts at 07:00

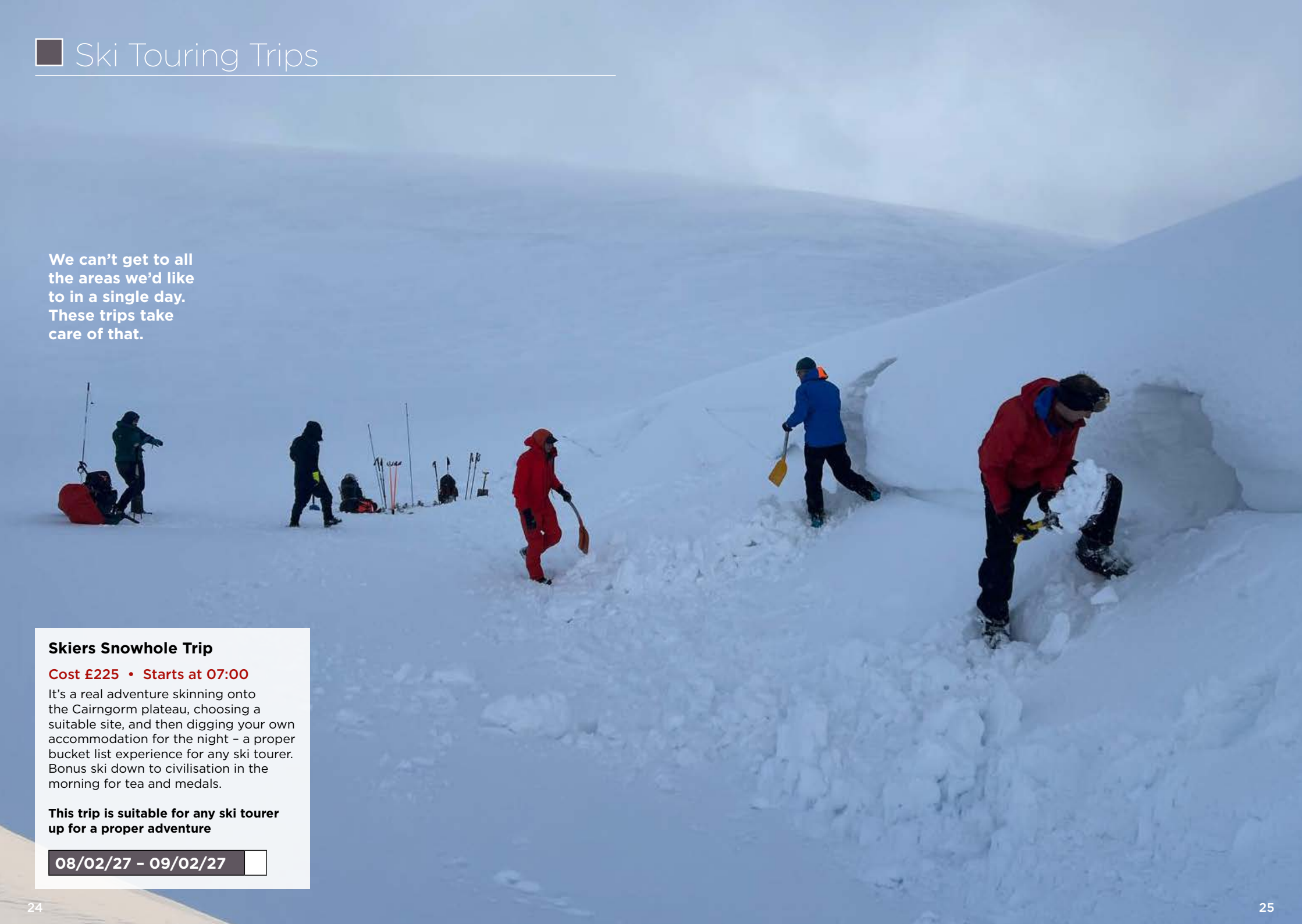
A day out in the mountains ski touring. There will be elements of teaching if required, however the focus will be on getting out and enjoying the hills. Previous trips have involved completing summits such as A'Bhuidheanach Bheag in the Drummochter Pass, Glas Maol in Glenshee and a traverse of Meall a'Choire Leith and Meall Corranaich in the Lawers region.

Ski ability – confident on red runs and experience of ski touring summits in Scotland or the Alps. A reasonable level of fitness is also required

09/01/27	28/02/27
17/01/27	09/03/27
26/01/27	21/03/27
3/02/27	

Ski Touring Trips

We can't get to all the areas we'd like to in a single day. These trips take care of that.



Skiers Snowhole Trip

Cost £225 • Starts at 07:00

It's a real adventure skinning onto the Cairngorm plateau, choosing a suitable site, and then digging your own accommodation for the night – a proper bucket list experience for any ski tourer. Bonus ski down to civilisation in the morning for tea and medals.

This trip is suitable for any ski tourer up for a proper adventure

08/02/27 – 09/02/27

Winter Programme - At a Glance

Local Hill Walks High Tops Mountaineering Climbing Skills Skiing Trips

	December 2026	January 2027	February 2027	March 2027
01		Office closed	Winter Mountain Skills	
02		Office closed	Winter Mountain Skills	Winter High Tops
03		Office closed	Guided Ski Touring	Winter Climbing
04		Office closed	Winter High Tops	Winter Mountain Skills
05			Winter Climbing	Winter Mountain Skills
06		Intro to Ski Touring		Intro to Ski Touring
07		Intro Winter Hills	Winter Mountaineering	
08			Snowhole Expedition: Walkers Snowhole Expedition: Skiers	Glen Affric High Tops Trip Glen Affric Mountaineering Trip
09		Winter Climbing Guided Ski Touring	Snowhole Expedition: Walkers Snowhole Expedition: Skiers	Glen Affric High Tops Trip Glen Affric Mountaineering Trip Guided Ski Touring
10		Winter High Tops Winter Mountaineering		Glen Affric High Tops Trip Glen Affric Mountaineering Trip
11				Glen Affric High Tops Trip Glen Affric Mountaineering Trip
12	Winter High Tops Winter Climbing			Intro to Ski Touring
13		Intro to Winter Climbing	Intro Winter Hills	
14				Winter Climbing
15			NW Highland Climbing Trip	Intro Winter Hills
16		Winter Mountain Skills Intro to Ski Touring	NW Highland Climbing Trip	Intro to Ski Touring
17	Winter Mountaineering	Winter Mountain Skills Guided Ski Touring	NW Highland Climbing Trip	Intro to Winter Climbing

Local Hill Walks High Tops Mountaineering Climbing Skills Skiing Trips

	December 2026	January 2027	February 2027	March 2027
18			NW Highland Climbing Trip	Winter High Tops
19				
20		Intro to Ski Touring		
21	Winter High Tops	Winter High Tops		Guided Ski Touring
22	Office closed			Winter Climbing
23	Office closed		Intro to Ski Touring	
24	Office closed	Intro Winter Hills	Winter Mountaineering	Winter Mountaineering
25	Office closed	Winter Ropework for Hillwalkers	Intro Winter Hills	Winter Ropework for Hillwalkers
26	Office closed	Guided Ski Touring	Local Hill Walk	Local Hill Walk
27	Office closed	Cairngorm Climbing Trip	Winter Ropework for Hillwalkers Intro to Winter Climbing	
28	Office closed	Cairngorm Climbing Trip	Winter Climbing Guided Ski Touring	
29	Office closed	Cairngorm Climbing Trip Local Hill Walk		
30	Office closed	Intro to Ski Touring		
31	Office closed			Winter Climbing

April 2026	
01	Winter High Tops

FALKIRK COUNCIL

falkirkleisureandculture.org

Feel FALKIRK



OUTDOOR ACTIVITY BASE

Bothkennar Hub
Main Street, SKINFLATS, FK2 8NU

Tel: 01324 506846
Email: outdooractivities@falkirk.gov.uk
www.falkirkleisureandculture.org/fit-and-active/get-outdoors

www.falkirkleisureandculture.org

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