

News Release

Wednesday 4 August 2016

Scotland – last chance to boot-up for SSAFA!

SSAFA, the Armed Forces charity, is calling up keen Scottish hikers to dust off their boots and join the Ben Nevis Trek this October to tick conquering the highest mountain in the UK off their bucket list and raise vital funds for SSAFA to support the Armed Forces community.

It's a nine mile trek up the tallest mountain in the UK, to a height of 4,414ft above sea level and the charity is searching for a further 40 hikers to join those eager folk who have already signed up for the three day event, for this once in a lifetime ascent up the King of Scottish peaks.

The trek takes place on 15 October 2016 and as it is on a first-come, first-serve basis, SSAFA is urging Scottish residents to **sign up before Friday 19 August 2016** at the very latest, to avoid disappointment!

Friday 14 October:

- Meet at Glasgow Central Train Station at 13:45hrs or at Glasgow International Airport at 14:20hrs to get the luxury coach north to Fort William. Hikers can make their own way there instead.
- SSAFA hikers have a very comfortable two night all-inclusive stay at the Ben Nevis Hotel & Leisure Club in Fort William, where upon arrival they will enjoy an evening meal and receive the essential safety presentation and talk from the Ptarmigan team in preparation for the trek the next morning.

Saturday 15 October 2016

- Starts with an all-important full Scottish breakfast then a short trip along to Glen Nevis.
- The start of the route follows the old pony track from Achintee and crosses the flanks of Meall ant Suidhe to the Halfway Lochan where the group will break for lunch.
- From the Halfway Lochan, the track makes a series of uphill zigzags over increasingly rocky terrain to lead hikers onto the extensive 100acre summit plateau, which is the

collapsed dome of an ancient volcano, where remains of the old summit observatory can be found.

- After the group photo and a bite to eat on the summit the group starts its descent back into Glen Nevis where they're be met by a cheerful reception at the finish!
- By no means is it all over though, when back at the hotel after a hot shower its dinner and hikers receive their certificate of achievement, then it's time to party and celebrate into the wee small hours!

Sunday 16 October 2016:

- A well-deserved full Scottish breakfast before boarding the coaches for the 2.5hr steady ride back to Glasgow.

Details:

- **Event date:** Friday 14 to Sunday 16 October 2016.
- **Distance:** 9 mile trek, to a height of 4,414ft.
- **Ability:** all abilities welcome, however a good fitness level is recommended.
- **Registration fee:** £50 to guarantee your place, then a further £185 for registration.
- **What is included?** Entry to the mountain, two nights DB&B hotel accommodation, SSAFA T-shirt, return coach transport from Glasgow to Fort William, safety presentation, qualified Mountain Guides, piper to start the group off, packed lunches and water, certificate of achievement, celebratory party.
- **Sponsorship target:** SSAFA asks each person to pledge to raise £500 each for SSAFA (on top of the £235 registration) which will go towards the charity's vital work supporting the Armed Forces community.
- **Deadline:** sign ups must be made by close of business on Friday 19 August 2016.
- **Find out more or to sign up visit:** www.ssafa.org.uk/ben-nevis or email SSAFA's Fundraising Manager for Scotland - David Black on david.bl@ssafa.org.uk or call him on 07557 268 867.

SSAFA Fundraising Director, Tegan Jones, says: "Don't miss out on the fantastic, once in a lifetime opportunity to see the beauty of the Scottish Highlands up close and like never before as well as raise vital funds to support the Armed Forces community, so sign up today!"

"Climbing Ben Nevis is an amazing experience for anyone who enjoys a challenge. It is also a great way to meet like-minded people who love the outdoors, love to exercise and want to give back to those that have already given so much.

“The event hopes to raise £20,000 which will be used to help us to continue to provide practical, emotional and financial support for the 60,000 people of the Armed Forces community we currently support every year.”

SSAFA is the oldest tri-service national military charity in the UK and its network of around 7,000 volunteers at 92 branches across the UK and overseas which support some 60,000 serving personnel, reservists, veterans and their families each year.

SSAFA in Scotland:

- In summer 2016, in Scotland, the charity has 22 branches. They are Aberdeen, Perth & Kinross, Argyll & Bute, Ayresshire, Borders, Caithness, Dumfries & Stewartry, Dunbartonshire, Dundee & Angus, Edinburgh & The Lothians, Fife, Glasgow, Inverness-shire, Lanark, Moray & Nairn & Banff, Orkney, Renfrewshire & Inverclyde, Ross & Comarty, Shetland, Stirling & Falkirk & Clackmannan, Sutherland and Wigtown.
- Across those 22 branches its volunteers did 1,842 vital home visits to the Armed Forces community in 2015 (an increase of 4% on the year before) and took on 3,062 cases where it supported the local Armed Forces community.

Ends

Notes to editors

About SSAFA:

SSAFA, the Armed Forces charity (formerly known as the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen & Families Association), provides lifelong support to anyone who is currently serving or has ever served in the Royal Navy, British Army or Royal Air Force, including reservists, and their families.

Each year, our professional staff and network of more than 7,000 volunteers help some 60,000 people, ranging from World War Two veterans to the families of young servicemen and women wounded or killed in Afghanistan. For more information visit www.ssafa.org.uk or follow us on Twitter: @SSAFA.

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