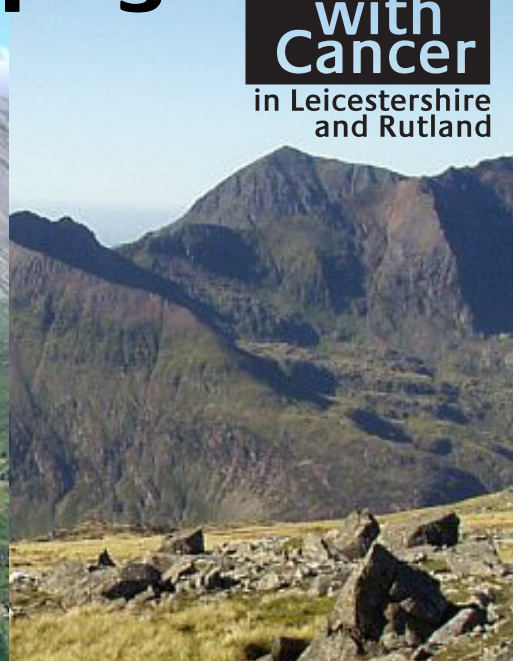
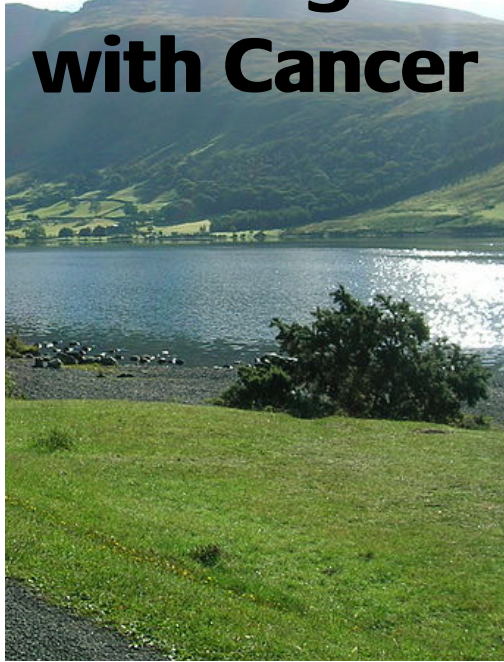


Tackling the Three Peaks Challenge in support of Coping with Cancer

**Coping
with
Cancer**

in Leicestershire
and Rutland



The Three Peaks Challenge involves climbing the three highest peaks in England, Wales and Scotland, all within 24 hours of starting the first Peak.

The three peaks are:

- **Ben Nevis, Scotland (1344m)**
- **Scafell Pike, England (978m)**
- **Snowdon, Wales (1085m)**

Maximum climbing times are generally suggested as being around 4 hours for Snowdon, and 5 hours for Ben Nevis and Scafell Pike, but you should aim for a half hour or so under. In itself this time isn't unrealistic for most relatively fit people, but it's certainly not a gentle walk, and when three climbs are required within 24 hours the Challenge becomes more difficult, draining your energy and depriving you of sleep.

In order to attempt the Three Peaks Challenge safely, you must have an adequate level of fitness.

When to attempt your Three Peaks Challenge

It is recommend organising your Three Peaks Challenge between May and October. This helps to avoid the harsh mountain weather in the colder months.

Weekends are most popular, which can create an excellent atmosphere, but if you're able to avoid the weekends, it'll be easier to find parking spaces and the summits will be less crowded.

Timings

Typically, you should allow the following times for each mountain:

- Five hours for Ben Nevis
- Four hours for Scafell Pike, from Wasdale Head
- Four hours for Snowdon

A good pace is needed, without wearing out too early. The best way of testing if you and your team are able is doing a bit of practice on whichever mountain is closest to you.

Add to those estimates approximately eleven hours driving - any faster and you would be breaking speed limits and making the climbing too easy, which isn't the idea of the Challenge.

Several timings options are available, depending on your arrival time into Fort William.

Option One - Walk in daylight

As long as your challenge team has a dedicated driver, this is probably the best time plan. Ben Nevis is climbed in the evening, then all walkers can have a six hour sleep while being driven to Scafell Pike, to start at around 4am. Snowdon is then climbed at approximately 1pm. This option maximises walking hours in daylight, so navigation should be as easy as it gets.

Option Two - Avoid Traffic

In order to avoid traffic, the common pitfall of the Three Peaks Challenge, it is sensible to begin at midday, finishing Ben Nevis by around 5pm, allowing for a late evening drive to Wasdale Head to climb Scafell Pike. Scafell Pike is then climbed in

the dark, followed by Snowdon in the morning.

Option Three - Long Day

This option allows both Ben Nevis and Scafell Pike to be climbed in daylight, by starting Ben Nevis at 6am and finishing Scafell Pike at around 9pm, leaving an easy Snowdon path to be climbed at night.

What are the paths like?

Ben Nevis

A single path runs up Ben Nevis, from Glen Nevis, which can be followed from either Glen Nevis Youth Hostel, or the Glen Nevis Visitor Centre. Early on the two paths join, and then continue to a Loch - Lochan Meall an t-Siudhe. From this half way point, the path follows a zigzag pattern to the peak.

Scafell Pike

Two usual routes are available for climbing Scafell Pike - either from Seathwaite, or Wasdale Head. Scafell Pike is considered to be the hardest of the three climbs, as the terrain underfoot can be very variable and the paths are less 'man made'.

Snowdon

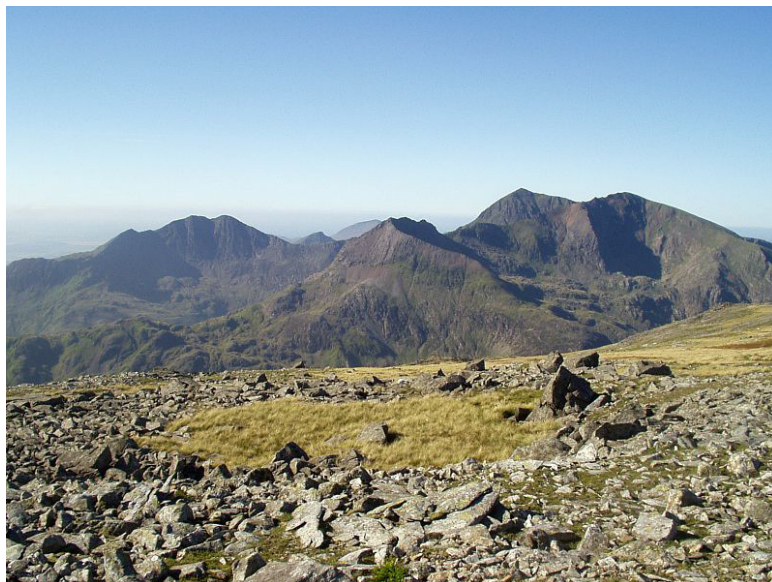
While Snowdon has many paths with varying difficulty, most Three Peaks Challengers will follow either the Pyg Track or Miners Track, leaving from the Pen-y-Pass car park. During the Summer months, the Snowdon visitor centre, Hafod Eryri, will be open at the peak, for a quick refreshment before descending.

Organising Your Three Peaks Challenge

When considering the Three Peaks Challenge, organisation is very important. You need to think about what you're taking on, as it is quite a big job if you want to do it properly.

Transport

To attempt the Three Peaks Challenge safely, you



need at least one driver for each vehicle. It is not advisable to attempt the challenge and drive yourself. Your driver needs to be willing to wait for long periods of time, and could also help the team out by preparing food for the returning team. To put this into context, the distances between the Three Peaks are as follows:

- Leicester to Fort William (Ben Nevis) 424 miles, approx 8 hours drive
- Fort William to Wasdale Head (Scafell Pike) 261 miles, approx 6 hours drive
- Wasdale Head to Pen y Pass (Snowdon) 219 miles, approx 5 hours drive
- Pen Y Pass to Leicester 161 miles, approx 3 hours 30 mins drive

Accommodation

For the Three Peaks Challenge, you need somewhere to stay at the beginning so that you are not attempting Ben Nevis after a long stint sat in the car or mini-bus. Also consider that at the end of your challenge you may feel too tired to travel very far (or fancy a celebratory pint or two!), so you'll want to find somewhere to stay close by to Snowdon.

Costs

Costs to consider are:

- Possible mini bus hire
- Buying petrol or diesel to cover the 1,100 mile round trip
- Overnight accommodation, at the start and possibly at the end
- Equipment and clothing
- Food and drinks for all the team

Frequently Asked Questions

I only have light clothing - is it safe to climb?

Any of the Three Peaks can be exposed to the absolute worst conditions the weather can throw at them, including extremely high winds, sub-zero temperatures, heavy rain, snow and blizzards

- sometimes all at once, therefore it is essential that anyone climbing takes suitable precautions and dresses appropriately. Light clothing that is adequate at sea level is unlikely to provide suitable protection except on the fairest days of summer.

We recommend that you take professional advice on the type of footwear and clothing you will need.

I don't have a map or compass - will it be okay to attempt the Three Peaks?

The short answer is 'no.' Navigation on any of the Peaks can be difficult, even for experienced walkers and climbers. On the best of summer days hill fog can roll in at any time to shroud the mountains



and is extremely disorientating, often resulting in people walking in the wrong direction. There have, unfortunately, been deaths caused by disorientated people mistakenly following the wrong route in the fog. It is highly advisable to have basic map reading skills.

We would also recommend at least one member of your group having basic first aid knowledge.

I am planning a sponsored event - do I need to contact anyone to get permission to climb the Three Peaks?

You do not need to seek permission from anyone to climb any of the Three Peaks.

Any tips for training for the Three Peaks Challenge?

Training is essential to your challenge preparation, especially as during the 24 hours you may also

experience sleep deprivation as well as the physical challenge of climbing all three peaks.

Before you start remember that your body may need time to adjust to your new fitness regime. We recommend that you ideally start your training plan no less than six months before you start your challenge.

If you live near hills, use them for your training as much as possible to prepare your muscles for doing lots of upward walking. If you don't have any hills near you, use the incline setting on a treadmill or visit hilly places for your weekend walks to practice.

Support for Coping with Cancer fundraisers

Coping with Cancer is happy to provide anyone wishing to undertake the Three Peaks Challenge to support our charity with the following:

- Coping with Cancer T-shirts (large enough to wear over your walking clothes for that all-important summit photo!)
- Personalised sponsorship forms
- On-line donation page via Virgin Money Giving
- Charity collection tins for your local club, gym or bar
- Support for any of your fundraising ideas

Do let us know in advance if you are fundraising for us so we can offer you plenty of support!

In 2011, two groups successfully attempted the Three Peaks Challenge for Coping with Cancer. If you would like us to put you in touch with these groups, to find out at first hand their experiences and how they organised their trips, please contact Jane Hagreen at Helen Webb House.

For more information, contact Jane Hagreen on 0116 223 0055 or email jane.hagreen@c-w-c.org.uk

Raising funds for Coping with Cancer

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