



MOUNTAIN ADVENTURE FUND



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FUND

Impact Report

SEP 2024 – AUG 2025

Introduction

Mike Penny and Paul Teuten – Founders

Everyone working on the Mountain Adventure Fund is driven by one simple, powerful goal: to give disadvantaged schoolchildren the chance to experience the rugged outdoors and the life-changing challenges of mountain environments.

Inspired by decades of witnessing the awe and wonder in children's eyes, we set out to create that same magic, giving young people an adventure that provides them with foundational skills and shapes the way they see the world and their future. This is the heart of Mountain Adventure Fund (MAF).

Now, in a world still recovering from the effects of COVID-19 lockdowns, and weakened economies, our mission has become even more urgent. While overall physical activity levels are bouncing back, the children who need it most — those from disadvantaged backgrounds — are being left behind. These are the young people we are determined to reach, to give them not just the opportunity, but the confidence, resilience, and inspiration that comes from being in the mountains.

Thank you once again for supporting us on our journey to ensure every schoolchild can be inspired and motivated by the rugged outdoors and the challenges that mountain environments offer.

This past year has been hugely successful, building on the 2023 pilot and establishing a strong foundation for our ongoing expansion across the UK.

In Autumn 2024, we took three primary schools to Plas y Brenin in Snowdonia, and teachers shared incredible stories of the profound impact the experience had on the children — visible immediately in their engagement with activities and continuing in the classroom long after their return.

Summer 2025 saw MAF expand its offering to secondary schools; welcoming Lyng Hall and Fortis Academy to Plas y Brenin.

Helen Morris from Canon Barnett Primary School stated *"The instructional staff and volunteer staff were exceptional and great role models.*

This group of children find it really difficult to stay in a classroom and concentrate for longer periods of time, whereas here you could see the teamwork when we went gorge scrambling.

They were helping each other, giving a hand not just to other children or to their friends but to everyone including teachers and the other adults. The children showed resilience, teamwork and amazed us."
(Oct 2024)

To further sustain enthusiasm for outdoor activities, we organise a series of adventurous sports in the schools' local communities for them to continue exploring and learning, notably kayaking and indoor climbing.

The Mountain Adventure Fund (MAF) is an initiative from the Mountain Training Trust, the charity that run the National Outdoor Centre at Plas y Brenin. This allows us to work in strong partnership with the staff and instructors at Plas y Brenin, delivering fantastic experiences for the children funded by MAF.

Additionally, we have begun collaborating with other organisations that can further support the local activities and already have the infrastructure and instructors to engage children. One of our most exciting developments has been working with indoor climbing facilities — in Summer 2024, we worked with 10 talented teenagers identified by their clubs as gifted, but lacking the financial means to climb outdoors. They successfully transitioned their skills from indoor climbing to outdoor rock faces, deepening their commitment to the sport. Other clubs are supporting us by hosting indoor climbing "taster" sessions for children who first tried climbing at Plas y Brenin.

Equally vital to our mission are the courses we run to train volunteers. Enthusiastic volunteers make a tremendous difference in the success of our programmes and the enjoyment of the children. Many of our volunteers come from our funding partners and are outdoor enthusiasts eager to share their passion for adventure and exploration.

We are proud of what MAF has achieved thus far and are determined to push forward to give all children the opportunity to experience the great outdoors and all it has to offer.

Engagement

Sep 2024 – Aug 2025

We continue to build on our success, having funded and implemented courses for volunteers and children over the past two years. This spring, we are expanding our offerings, ensuring even more participants benefit from our initiatives

The number of children reached by MAF doubled compared to the previous year.

269



**Young People
attended local
activities**

123



**Young People
attended
residential at PyB**

5



**MAF engaged
with 5 schools**

3



**These schools are
based in 3
geographical regions
– London, Coventry
& Birmingham**

The Experience

Residential

This past academic year, MAF built on the success of the previous year, taking more children from three London primary schools (Canon Barnett Primary and Thomas Buxton Primary, both in Tower Hamlets, and Fryent Primary in Brent) and two secondary schools (Lyng Hall in Coventry and Fortis Academy in Birmingham) on a week-long adventure at the National Outdoor Centre in Plas y Brenin.


The journey began with the children traveling by train alongside their teachers and volunteers, an experience many had never undertaken before without their families. Upon arrival, they found themselves fully immersed in a range of outdoor activities, discovering new challenges and adventures in the stunning mountain environment.

Each course was led by expert instructors at Plas y Brenin, with additional support from teaching staff and volunteers. An impressive child-to-adult ratio of 3:1 ensured that every child received close guidance, encouragement, and a memorable experience.


Local Activities

The Mountain Adventure Fund is committed to fostering the valuable experiences gained during residential stays at Plas y Brenin. To keep the children's enthusiasm alive and reinforce the skills they are starting to learn in the outdoors, MAF funds local opportunities such as climbing wall sessions and kayaking at centres conveniently located near the schools.


Children's experiences



Hana struggled to complete daily tasks at home independently, and since coming back from the residential their parents have shared how they now take more agency in everything they do, often saying "I've got it" or "I can do it" when offered help.



Kai struggled at school both with relationships, and general education. When he came on the residential, it was clear he was a truly talented at bouldering, and he started to take up a leadership position helping others. It was a huge shift change in his confidence and relationships.



Anu loved the school monkey bars, but hadn't experienced anything more challenging than that, until she went to PyB and scaled the climbing wall with ease, strength and agility. When she got home we told her mum, who was in shock. Neither Anu or her Mum knew how strong a climber she was!

Schools

It has been fantastic to work with these schools during this past academic year, all of whom we continue to work with through 2025-26.



Fryent Primary School



Measuring Impact

Key Participant Metrics

Schools shared that as a result of engaging in MAF, young people increased the following skills, tracked through interviews and feedback forms:



Teamwork



Confidence



Wellbeing



Outdoor
Appreciation



Physical
Fitness

Impact by Goals

Participation in our outdoor courses is designed to foster crucial personal and social outcomes among children.

Access to Wild Places

- A report by Natural England shows fewer than 10% of children playing in wild places compared with 40% of adults when they were young.
- Children in the most deprived areas are 20% less likely to visit natural environment.
- Ethnic minority and disabled children are also less likely to access wild spaces due to multiple barriers.

Improve Mental Health

- An NHS England report (2023) estimated one in five children and young people suffered a mental health disorder, a marked deterioration.
- A number of studies have shown that taking part in nature-based activities or immersing yourself in nature help people who are suffering from mental ill-health recover their personal strength and resilience and contribute to a reduction in levels of anxiety, stress and depression.

Improve Education Outcomes

- Students who are physically active tend to have better grades, attendance, cognitive performance and classroom behaviour; and the outcome of all the class improves if those with the poorest behaviour improve (NCES 2024)

Improve Physical Health

- The Health survey for England (2022) confirms that children aged 2 to 15, the prevalence of obesity was 15%, the prevalence of overweight (including obesity) was 27%.
- Without support these young people are likely to require medical help all their lives and will be much more prone to develop non-communicable diseases like diabetes and cardiovascular diseases at a younger age.

Objectives

Sep 2025 – Aug 2026

Mountain Adventure Fund is committed to ensuring that every experience we provide has a lasting, measurable impact on children's physical and mental wellbeing. Academic research continues to reinforce the value of what we do. A Holistic Perspective on Children's Health: A Review on the Benefits of Nature-Based Recreational Activities (2023) analysed 59 studies, finding both direct and indirect benefits of outdoor experiences. The review highlights how activities such as hiking, swimming, and camping improve emotional stability, physical fitness, intellectual growth, social skills, and even spiritual health. These experiences also strengthen children's environmental awareness and foster cognitive development – laying the foundations for long-term wellbeing and a deeper connection with the natural world.

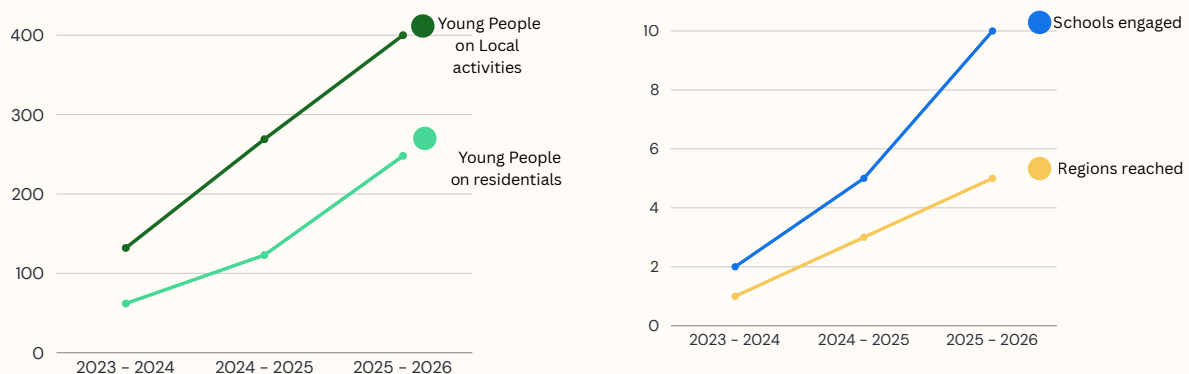
In light of these insights, our objectives for the 2025/26 academic year are ambitious and forward-looking. We aim to:

- Raise our profile nationally, highlighting the role of adventure in children's health.
- Expand our reach to five regions across the UK, enabling more children to access transformative outdoor experiences.
- Extend our offer to senior and primary schools, embedding skills progression.
- Build partnerships with like-minded organisations to strengthen our collective impact.

By weaving together research, lived experience, and a commitment to inclusivity, we are determined to broaden the reach and deepen the impact of our work – ensuring that more children than ever before can thrive in nature and carry its benefits into every aspect of their lives.

MAF Growth

Showcasing growth plan from Academic years 2023 to 2025



Targets
Academic
year 25-26

400
Young people on local
activities

250
Young people on
residential

10
Schools Engaged

5
Regions reached

Our Volunteers

Volunteers are the backbone of the Mountain Adventure Fund's success.

They play a crucial role in ensuring children can participate in our residential experiences. They consistently seek ways to support the children, whether through personal dedication or corporate involvement.

In 2024, we trained an additional 14 volunteers to prepare for the expansion of our programme in 2025. As part of their training, each volunteer attended Plas y Brenin to enhance their personal skills and acquire essential group leadership techniques for outdoor environments.

Upon completing their training course, including enhanced DBS check and the completion of online safeguarding training, volunteers receive a certificate acknowledging their achievements.

Our volunteers actively contribute to the initiative's sustainability by engaging with children in local activities and supporting future residential trips—whether at the Plas y Brenin National Outdoor Centre or other locations.



Fundraising

Why not support **Mountain Adventure Fund** by taking part in a challenge event? From 5k runs to the London Marathon, we have spaces available in hundreds of events up and down the country.

If running is not your thing? There are also obstacle courses, skydives and lots of other exciting challenges to take part in! We can provide you or your employees with the support needed to participate and make the most of these incredible opportunities.

These events are so much more than just races—they're an opportunity to unite, have fun, embrace the great outdoors, and make a difference to young individuals across the country.

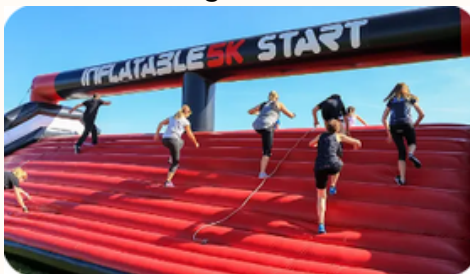
For details on any challenges you would like to consider, please reach out to karen.pritchard@mountainadventurefund.org



Running Events



Tough Mudders



Events by Region



Partners

Special thanks to our funding partners for supporting us and enabling the work we do. We are always on the look out to partner with people who share our values and ambitions.



EQUISTONE

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We thank you for your
ongoing support of
our programme

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