



Autumn Gathering 2019

Hosted by



Friday October 18<sup>th</sup> – Sunday October 20<sup>th</sup> 2019

## Kilmacthomas Walking Club

Kilmacthomas Walking Club, Kilmacthomas, Co Waterford was founded in November 2004 so we are now approaching 15 years in existence. We have approximately 60 members at present.



Kilmacthomas is located at the base of the Comeragh Mountains in the heart of Waterford halfway between Waterford City and Dungarvan. The club was formed to explore and appreciate the beauty of the adjacent mountains.

The club normally meets on Sunday mornings in Kilmacthomas to carpool to the walk location. Our walk programme is available on our web site and any last minute alterations are notified to club members via 'Whats app'.

The natural beauty of the countryside in Waterford is often overlooked in favour of other tourist sites, which is a pity, as few other counties have such a variety of mountain, sea and river environments all within close proximity to each other and are easily accessible. The club is fortunate to have all of this natural beauty on our door step.

The club likes to pride itself on its friendliness and accommodates walkers at all levels. Companionship is an important aspect of the club. Our mantra is: "it's not a competition" and we walk at a pace that suits our participants. We generally alternate between flat and hill/mountain walks every other week. Most walks take between 2 and 4 hours.

We walk primarily in the Comeragh/Monavullagh Mountains but we also go regularly to the Knockmealdowns, Galtees, Slievenamon, and elsewhere, as well as flat walks throughout the southeast along river, forest and coastal routes.



The club is conscious of its responsibility not to disturb the environment in which we walk and the need to protect and conserve the landscape that we enjoy so much and to leave it so that others may also derive the same pleasures as we have.

The club encourages its members to improve their skills in navigation, walk leadership, mountain skills while at the same time benefitting from improved fitness and health. We believe that it is very important to stop and enjoy the beauty around us.

We appreciate the local agriculture community for their good will in allowing us access to such marvellous amenities.

We have had a few “away” weekends each year and we celebrate Christmas and the Summer with nights out. In addition, most years the club plans a walking trip abroad. Previous trips have included sections of the Camino de Santiago de Compostela, Snowdonia, Nepal and The Dolomites.

We have also had night walks in the Comeragh’s which have been dependent on a full moon and clear skies.

### **Autumn Gathering 2019**

**The Comeragh mountain range** contains a number of sub mountains that include Monavullagh, Coumaraglin and Lyre mountains and stretches from Dungarvan in the south to Clonmel in the north. There are a series of corries along the east and west flanks of the mountains. The eastern face of the mountains contains cliff faces and corries while the western face consists of a more gentle sloping landscape. The extent of the mountain range is contained on the Ordnance Survey Map No. 75.

The mountain range contains few peaks as the summit is a plateau and the highest point is at 792 metres, marked by a cairn otherwise it might not be easily located as there is nothing to distinguish it from the surrounding area. Once climbed the Comeraghs may seem an easy crossing but there are many obstacles in the soft peat covering such as wet bog, cuttings, rivers all of which can be energy draining. When visibility is poor navigation skills are required to safely transverse the mountains as there are few suitable landmarks to guide the way.

The Comeragh plateau is an eroding blanket bog with numerous peat hags, exposed gravel and wet bog areas. The plateau landscape might be compared to a lunar type situation. Ground cover consists principally of grasses, peat, heather and ferns.

The attraction of the Comeraghs is the variety of the landscape it offers which include some of the finest corry lakes in the country, rivers, forests, valleys, waterfalls, cliff faces, ridges and

rolling hills. There is a waterfall above the Sgilloges where the prevailing wind can blow the water backwards to form a mist and that is referred to as 'sean bhean ag caitheamh tobac'

Coumshinguan Lake is the largest lake in the Comeraghs and covers an area of about 15 hectares and has a vertical cliff face to the rear which is 350 metres high which is almost double the height of the Cliffs of Mohar. Most of the lakes in the Comeraghs are corrie lakes or cuams which were formed by glacial movement during the Ice Age. Not all of the cuams contain lakes such as Cuam Eag which is a dry cuam.

The high level horseshoe walk above the Cuamshinguan is one of the finest walks in the south east of the country and includes scrambling, a bit of bouldering and great views out to sea or inland to the Galtee and the Knockmealdown mountain ranges on a clear day.



Adjacent to Counshinguan is Crotty's Lake and Crotty's Rock which was the hiding place of an eighteenth century highwayman and despite many years of searching we have not found any of his rumoured hidden hoard. To the rear of Crotty's Lake is Cuam Iathar another fine example of a corrie lake with a flat plateau overhead, a rear cliff wall and a lake entrapped by a moraine. There are a number of smaller lakes downstream from the main lake.

Continuing anticlockwise around the perimeter of the mountain is Cuamdula and further on under Knockanaffrin is Lake Morha. In the Nire Valley there are the two Sgilloge Loughs, the two Coumalocha Lakes and further on Lough Cuamfea. Over the mountain are a string of small lakes in Coumtae.

There are few defined tracks in the Comeraghs but a number of marked ways have been established in the Nire Valley area. There is a trail head at the Nire Carpark (S 277 128) and at Curraheen (S 307 154) that give access to these tracks. A tarmac path gives access to the waterfall at Mahon Falls which is a very popular tourist attraction. Close to the Falls the local community have developed a pleasant walk in Crough (pronounced 'crew') Wood which is a beautiful oak and beech forest straddling the Mahon River.

Much of the walking in the Comeraghs is in open ground and maybe, if you're lucky you will find some sheep tracks to ease the trek.

The Mahon, the Clodiagh and the Nire rivers rise in close proximity to each in the plateau above Cuamshinguan. Other rivers that rise in the Comeraghs include the Glasha, the Glenary, the Colligan, the Dalligan and the Tay.

The Comeraghs contain much evidence of past civilizations with numerous standing stones, stone circles, barrows and fulacha fias. It is astonishing to think that we walk about in an area that was once a thriving community more than 4000 years ago. There are many remains of the built environment hidden in the hills ranging from the above archaeological finds, deserted villages in Glenary and in Corraun, an ex British Army Shooting Range on Long Hill, stone sheep enclosures, and two disused ugly MMD relay stations.



The Comeragh Mountains are an under used amenity and it is possible to spend a weekend in the mountain without seeing another human being. The walk into the Falls and low level access to Cuamshinguan can be very popular especially at weekends.

Waterford is fortunate in having such rich and varied mountains in its midst.



We will be based out of The Park Hotel for the entire weekend. The Hotel provides meeting room space as well as a large dining area for the Saturday night dinner and entertainment and a separate bar and restaurant area. We have booked a number of rooms for the Gathering. Please let the hotel know you are with the Mountaineering Ireland Autumn Gathering at the time of booking to avail of a special rate. **Any unallocated rooms will be released back to the hotel so be sure to book early.**

As always, Saturday is the main day of activities during the weekend with walking and an environmental workshops available to choose from. We limit numbers on most of our activities so please **make your selection at the time of booking online**. The **member's forum** will take place in the Park Hotel at **18.30 on Saturday evening**. We will go straight into dinner and entertainment **at 20.00**.

Sunday morning will see a range of 3 hour workshops and a walk on the greenway. **Again, please book your choice of workshop online as places are limited.**

#### Accommodation:

VENUE
<b>The Park Hotel</b> <a href="http://www.parkhoteldungarvan.com">www.parkhoteldungarvan.com</a> Tel: 058 42899 Rate: €105 for 2 nights, B&B, per person sharing Single occupancy €85 per night
<b>Alternative Accommodation</b>
Dungarvan Hostel <a href="http://www.dungarvanhostel.com">www.dungarvanhostel.com</a> Tel: 058 21288 Email: <a href="mailto:reservations@dungarvanhostel.com">reservations@dungarvanhostel.com</a>
The Gold Coast <a href="http://www.goldcoastgolfresort.com">www.goldcoastgolfresort.com</a> Tel: 058 45050 Email: <a href="mailto:reception@goldcoastgolfresort.com">reception@goldcoastgolfresort.com</a>
The Lawlors Hotel <a href="http://www.lawlorshotel.com">www.lawlorshotel.com</a> Tel: +353 (0) 58-41122 Email: <a href="mailto:info@lawlorshotel.com">info@lawlorshotel.com</a>

## Programme of Events:

### Friday October 18<sup>th</sup>

Why not start the weekend with a short informal walk with members of **Kilmacthomas Walking Club**. When registering online please select “additional options” to let leaders know you will be attending. You can meet members for lunch at the Coach House in Kilmacthomas for 1pm and from there they will hike up Croughan Hill. Walk will start at 2:15pm.

**18:30** – Registration in the lobby area of The Park Hotel. There is a bar area/restaurant in the hotel to grab something to eat when you arrive.

**19:30** – Opening of the Gathering by Paul Kellagher President of Mountaineering Ireland and a welcome by Con Murphy, Chairperson of Kilmacthomas Walking Club.

### Guest Speaker

Mountaineering Ireland is delighted to announce that recently-elected Green Party MEP, Grace O’Sullivan will be our guest speaker.

### Saturday October 19<sup>th</sup>

Variety of walks and workshops departing from the Park Hotel. Please ensure you have walking gear for all weathers with you including hiking boots with good ankle support as the terrain on some of the walks is steep and can be challenging. We have given an indication of the level of difficulty of each walk below, however, please read the description to choose one which is more appropriate for you.

**08.45**                      Assemble in the foyer of The Park Hotel Dungarvan for departure to the trailheads.

**Choose from the scrambling skills course or any one of the 9 walks numbered 1 - 8 and the Environment Walk indicated in the following pages:**

### Training – Scrambling Skills

Our training Officer will be conducting a scrambling skills course which will cover the use of ropes, and climbing equipment to protect on steeper scrambling terrain. Ratio 1 – 4.

# WALK NO 1 PLATEAU AND LAKES DIFFICULT WALK

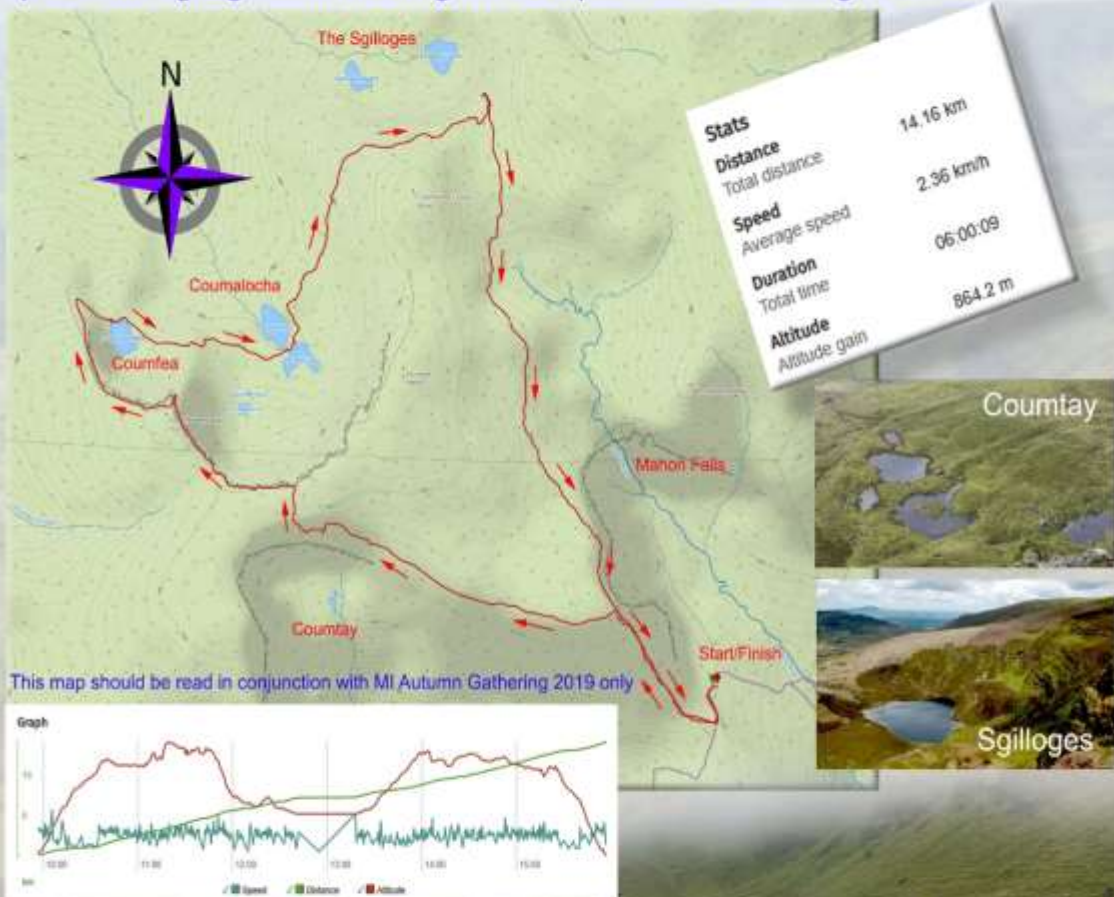


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## Autumn Gathering 18th - 20th October 2019

**The Plateau and Lakes:** From the Falls carpark up Comeragh to to Coum Tay, at high level and on to Coumalocha and dropping down to Coumfea over to Coumalocha and up over the Sgilloges and returning to the carpark via the Comeragh Plateau



This map should be read in conjunction with MI Autumn Gathering 2019 only



The walk route shall be subject to the weather conditions on the day. Walkers shall notify the walk leader of any medical condition that may affect their or others active participation in the walk.



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## Autumn Gathering 18th - 20th October 2019

**Knockanaffrin Ridge:** From the Wilderness Camp proceed up the forest track to a turning circle and head north into the forest onto a track and head west up to open mountain head north to a large boulder and turn west to follow a track to the wire fence at The Gap ahead north to follow the Knockanaffrin Ridge before descending to the north of Lough Morha and rounding the lough to exit into the forest track to head over to The Gap via Coumduala and returning to the Wilderness Camp by the same track as used earlier.

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The walk route shall be subject to the weather conditions on the day. Walkers shall notify the walk leader of any medical condition that may affect their or others active participation in the walk.



Length: <b>17.97 km</b>	Total Ascent: <b>727 meter</b>
Surface: <b>Undefined</b>	Total Descent: <b>726 meter</b>
Difficulty: <b>Medium</b>	Max Elevation: <b>724 meter</b>
Duration: <b>6 hours approx</b>	Min Elevation: <b>88 meter</b>





# WALK 3 COUMSHINGUAN HORSESHOE MODERATE WALK



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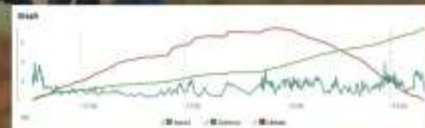
## Autumn Gathering 18th - 20th October 2019 Coumshinguan Horseshoe from Kilclooney including 792



**The Coumshinguan Horseshoe:** This walk is one of the finest walks in Waterford and includes trekking, ridges, scrambling and a little climbing around this wonderful corrie lake. The walk starts in the carpark in Kilclooney Wood and proceeds into open mountain up the southern ridge of the lake to the highest point of the Comeraghs 792m and back the northern ridge to the carpark

The walk route shall be subject to the weather conditions on the day. Walkers shall notify the walk leader of any medical condition that may affect their or others active participation in the walk.

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WALK NO 4

MAHON FALLS

MODERATE WALK

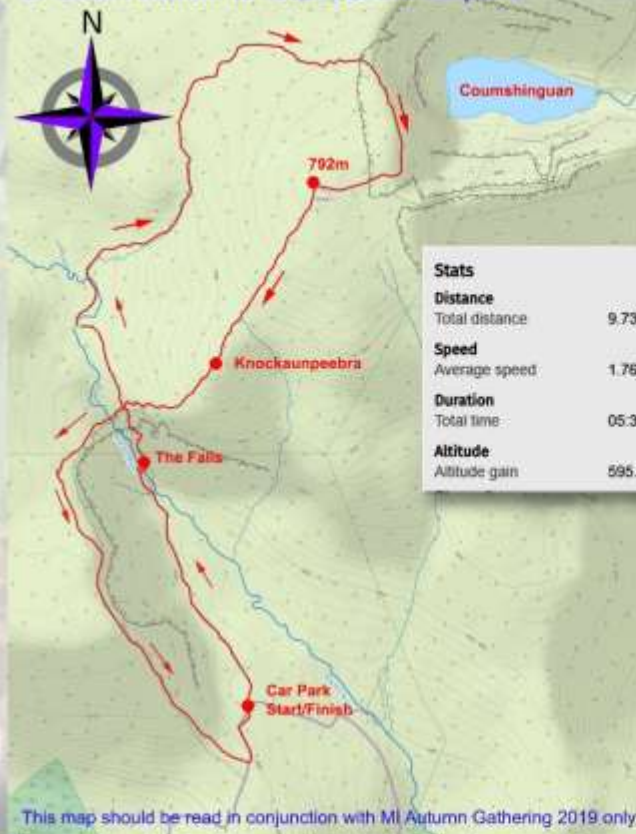


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**Mahon Falls:** From the Car Park at Mahon Falls head in the path to the falls crossing the Mahon river at the base of the falls, climb up the path at the eastern side to the top and follow the river into the black bog and on to the ridge over Coumshinguan continue south to a small cairn and turn west to the cairn at 792 and head to the twin cairns on Knockaunpeebrá and then down to cross the Mahon and heading up to a rocky outcrop and then follow the western ridge of of Coum Mahon to return to the carpark.



Stats	
<b>Distance</b>	
Total distance	9.73 km
<b>Speed</b>	
Average speed	1.76 km/h
<b>Duration</b>	
Total time	05:32:39
<b>Altitude</b>	
Altitude gain	595.4 m



Mahon River



Mahon Falls



Coumshinguan

The walk route shall be subject to the weather conditions on the day. Walkers shall notify the walk leader of any medical condition that may affect their or others active participation in the walk.



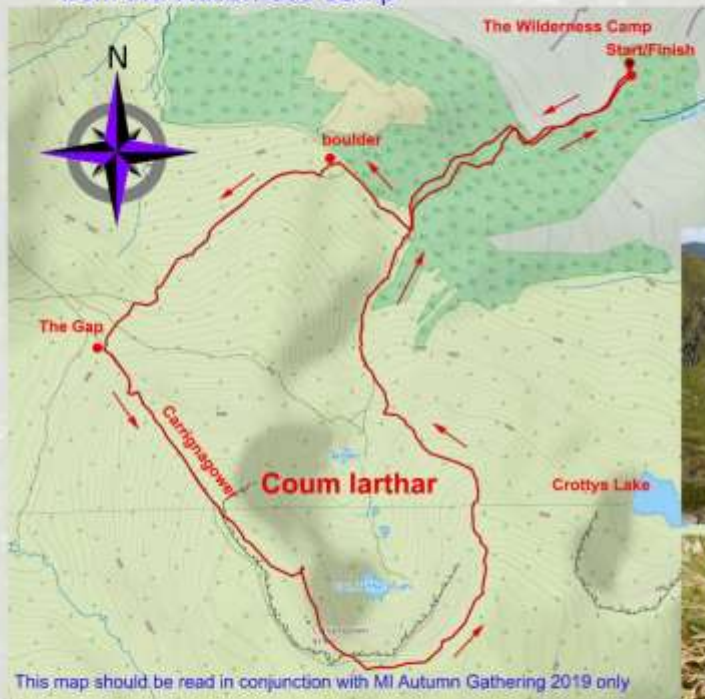


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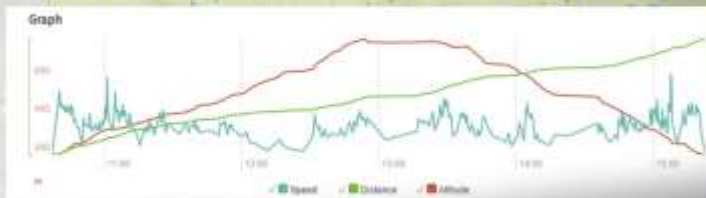


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**Coum Iarthar:** From the Wilderness Camp up by the forest to open mountain head north west to a large boulder turn at right angles to take the old mass route up to the wire fence at the Gap then head straight up Carrignagower over Coum Iarthar and head back down the eastern spur to rejoin the route up from the Wilderness Camp



Stats	
Distance	8.52 km
Total distance	2.06 km/h
Speed	
Average speed	04:06:37
Duration	
Total time	
Altitude	
Altitude gain	625 m



The walk route shall be subject to the weather conditions on the day. Walkers shall notify the walk leader of any medical condition that may affect their or others active participation in the walk.





WALK NO 6

SEEFIN

MODERATE WALK



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## Autumn Gathering 18th - 20th October 2019

**Seefin:** Starting from the Mauma Road heading up to a mast at Farbreaga on to the standing stone at Barnamadra and up to the hut on Seefin and descending by the track to head into a forest and head back to the standing stone and returning to the start point.



Stats	
<b>Distance</b>	15.28 km
Total distance	
<b>Speed</b>	3.03 km/h
Average speed	
<b>Duration</b>	05:03:00
Total time	
<b>Altitude</b>	752.3 m
Altitude gain	



The walk route shall be subject to the weather conditions on the day. Walkers shall notify the walk leader of any medical condition that may affect their or others active participation in the walk.



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## Autumn Gathering 18th - 20th October 2019

**Crough Wood-Mahon Falls** Beautiful wooded Crough Wood at the edge of the Mahon River walk leading on to the 'magic' road' where a rise appears to be a fall. Walk onwards to the Mahon Falls and return via open countryside by Davmore and back into the woods to the start point

The actual walk route shall be subject to the weather conditions on the day. The leader has the right to extend, curtail or alter the route from that described. Walkers shall notify the walk leader of any medical condition that may affect their or others active participation in the walk



Mahon River



Mahon Falls



Length: 9.41 km	Total Ascent: 347 meter
Surface: Undefined	Total Descent: 333 meter
Difficulty: Medium	Max Elevation: 414 meter
Duration: 3.30hrs approx	Min Elevation: 118 meter



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WALK NO 8

CROHAUN - MONARUD

EASY WALK



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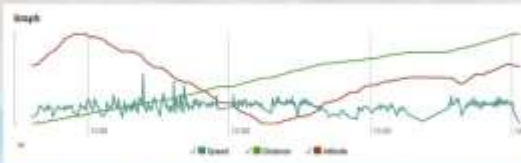
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**Crohaun-Monarud:** Start at the base of the track (S26890 01390) uphill to a mast and on to a cross with views of Dungarvan Bay. back down through forest tracks to public road head eastwards to laneway up into open ground to edge of forest back to forest track and return to start

This map should be read in conjunction with MI Autumn Gathering only



Stats	
<b>Distance</b>	
Total distance	10.7 km
<b>Speed</b>	
Average speed	3.05 km/h
<b>Duration</b>	
Total time	03:30:50
<b>Altitude</b>	
Altitude gain	398.9 m



The walk route shall be subject to the weather conditions on the day.  
Walkers shall notify the walk leader of any medical condition that may affect their or others active participation in the walk



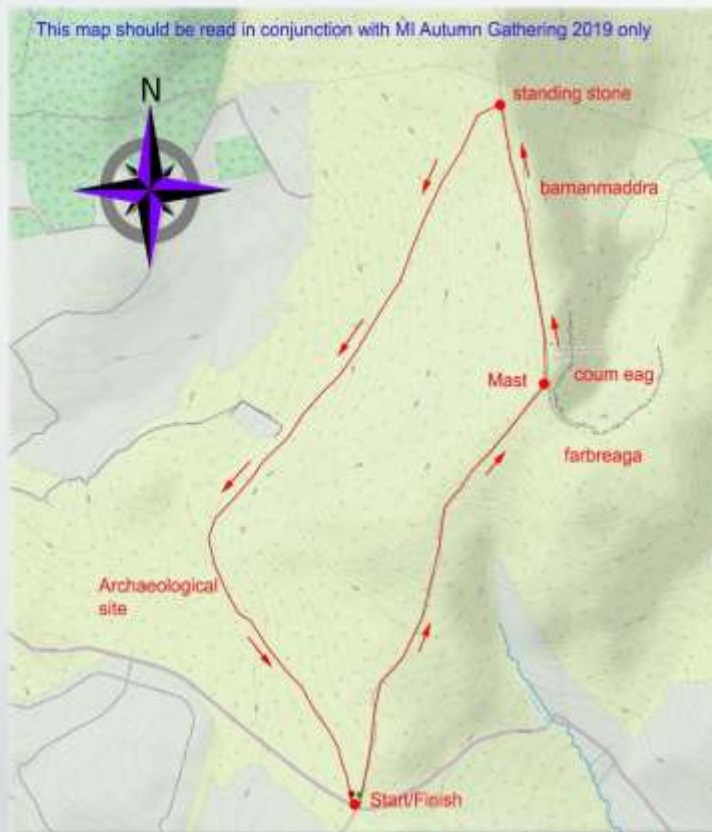
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## Autumn Gathering 18th - 20th October 2019

**Seefin:** Starting from the Mauma Road heading up to a mast at Farbreaga on to the standing stone at Baranmaddra and descending the western face of Monavullagh Mountain to the Archaeological site at the base of the Mountain and back to the start point.



Standing Stone



Archaeological Site

The walk route shall be subject to the weather conditions on the day. Walkers shall notify the walk leader of any medical condition that may affect their or others active participation in the walk.

This walk shall be led by Jim Bowdren (Kilmacthomas Walking Club) and Helen Lawless (Mountaineering Ireland)

Length: 9.23 km	Total Ascent: 391 meter
Surface: Undefined	Total Descent: 392 meter
Difficulty: Medium	Max Elevation: 606 meter
Time: 4 hours 30 mins	Min Elevation: 257 meter



Mast

**Saturday Evening**  
**18.30**

**Mountaineering Member's Forum – Dining Room The Park Hotel**

The member's forum is open to all MI members whether you are attending the entire weekend of activities or not. This is an open forum led by the Chairperson and CEO of Mountaineering Ireland. It is an opportunity to air any concerns or queries with the Board, staff and other members either individually or on behalf of your club. It can also be used as an information sharing facility. Topics discussed are generally of interest to all individuals and clubs so we would encourage as many of those attending the Autumn Gathering as possible to come to the member's forum and feedback to your member club afterwards.

**20.00** Dinner in dining room, The Park Hotel

**Sunday October 20<sup>th</sup>**

There will be a variety of workshops available from 10:00 to 13:00 on Sunday morning. Please choose from the options below and make sure to include them when booking online.

**1. OSI Mapping Discussion – The Park Hotel**

This workshop will allow map enthusiast provide suggestions to some of OSi new adventure series maps. This is an opportunity to ensure that the maps cater for hillwalkers and Mountaineering Ireland will then feedback suggestions from our members to Ordnance Survey.

**2. Access Discussion**

The discussion will be led by Helen Lawless, Mountaineering Ireland's Hillwalking, Access & Conservation Officer and will include discussion on current access concerns and future developments.

**3. Club Training Workshop**

This workshop will be a mixture of indoor learning and practical outdoor sessions. Initially we will look at some suggested models for in-club training and what resources are available from Mountaineering Ireland to support club training. The outdoor session will focus on practical tips for teaching navigation, movement and leadership along with how to introduce training into your regular walks.

**Walk Option:** There will be an organised walk from Durrow to Dungarvan along the Greenway which will leave the Park Hotel at 10am.

**13.00** Gathering Ends

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