



AUTUMN GATHERING

31st Oct – Sunday 2nd Nov 2025

Hosted in conjunction with



About Sliabh Hiking

Sliabh Hiking is a hiking community based in the Comeragh Mountains of County Waterford. Founded in 2022 by April Brophy, the club was created with a simple but powerful mission: to make the mountains accessible to everyone, no matter their level of experience.

Our motto, “Your Path, Our Passion - Let’s Hike Together,” captures the spirit of inclusivity and adventure that drives our group. From its beginnings as a small local walking community, Sliabh Hiking has grown quickly, drawing members not just from Waterford but all over Ireland. The Comeraghs are our club’s home ground, and monthly treks have become the heartbeat of the group. Outings range from gentle introductions to hiking, right through to challenging ascents. All walks are led by our team of leaders, ensuring safety and a supportive atmosphere on every hike.

The Spirit of Sliabh Hiking

What makes Sliabh Hiking special is its strong sense of community. Members often remark that it’s not just about the views from the ridges or the thrill of a tough climb—it’s about the people we share the trail with. Social hikes, seasonal events, and charity treks have become part of the rhythm of the club, weaving friendship and fun into every adventure.



The club is also deeply committed to responsible mountaineering. Through a focus on navigation training, Leave No Trace principles, and a genuine respect for the landscape, Sliabh Hiking promotes sustainable enjoyment of Ireland’s uplands.

Hosting the Autumn Gathering 2025

It is a great honour for our club to host Mountaineering Ireland’s Autumn Gathering 2025 in the Comeragh Mountains. The Comeraghs provide the perfect stage for this national event. With their iconic corrie lakes like Coumshingaun, sweeping ridges, and the dramatic Mahon Falls, the range offers routes for all abilities and a chance to experience the wild beauty of Waterford’s uplands.

Sliabh Hiking is excited to share their home terrain and local knowledge. Hosting the Autumn Gathering in conjunction with Mountaineering Ireland is a milestone for our club. It’s not just a chance to showcase the Comeraghs, but also an opportunity to celebrate how far Sliabh Hiking has come since its founding. In welcoming walkers from across the country, we hope to share not only the rugged beauty of the southeast, but also the warmth, inclusivity, and community spirit that define Sliabh Hiking.

Autumn Gathering 2025

This year's Gathering will be based out of the Park Hotel. The Comeragh Mountains are located approximately 25 km away (around 25 minutes by car), making it an ideal location for the gathering.



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.**

Registration for the weekend is €60 which is subsidised by Mountaineering Ireland and includes talks, activities, workshops, dinner on Saturday evening, a gift, and buses where needed. There is an alternative fee of €30 for those who do not want to attend the Saturday evening dinner in the hotel. The dinner on Saturday evening is always a fun and social part of the gathering and we would encourage as many participants as possible to attend.

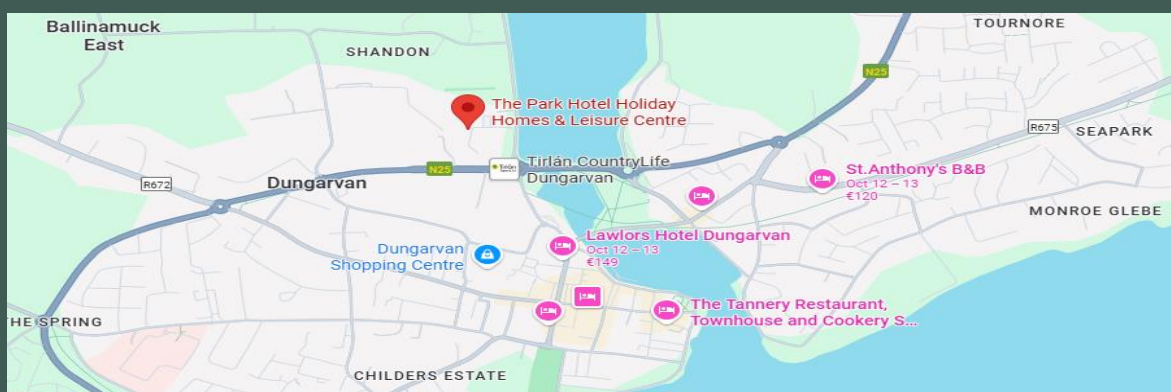
The weekend will start with registration from 6.30pm at the Park Hotel where you will receive a gift and full details for the weekend ahead. The welcome talk will take place from 8.00pm. Saturday sees a full programme of activities including hillwalking, navigation and climbing in and around the Comeragh mountains. Sunday morning will have a regional club workshop commencing at 10.00am.

The Venue & Accommodation:

The Park Hotel, Dungarvan, Co Waterford: +353 58 42899| Email reservations@parkhoteldungarvan.com

Alternative Accommodation

1. Dungarvan Hostel, www.dungarvanhostel.com Tel: 058 21288
Email: reservations@dungarvanhostel.com
 2. The Gold Coast www.goldcoastgolfresort.com Tel: 058 45050
Email: reception@goldcoastgolfresort.com
 3. The Lawlors Hotel www.lawlorshotel.com Tel: +353 (0) 58-41122
Email: info@lawlorshotel.com
- Or accommodation through the following sites: booking.com, Airbnb



Programme of Events

Friday 31st October

14:30- 17:00 – Walk – Starting from the Mauma Road walk to Farbreaga and back. Register your interest at the time of booking.

18.30 – Registration in the lobby area of the Park Hotel. There is a bar area in the hotel to grab something to eat when you arrive. If you cannot register on the Friday night, please contact christina@mountaineering.ie.

20.00 – Welcome from Mountaineering Ireland and Sliabh Hiking Club.

Guest Speaker: Mountaineering Ireland is delighted to have Debbie Hally Winchman with Ireland's elite rescue 117 crew as our guest speaker.

Saturday 1st November

A variety of walks and other activities will be held on Saturday, departing from the Park Hotel between 8.30am and 10am. Please note that packed lunches are available from the hotel but must be ordered before 8pm on Friday evening (please book with hotel when you check in or beforehand).

Terrain Underfoot

The terrain underfoot depends on where you go: On open mountain and ridges you will find heather, coarse grass, and peaty soil. Can feel springy but also boggy in places, especially after rain. Through valleys & approaches you will find fields and tracks at the lower levels, which often give way to wet ground and sheep paths. Plateaus will have peat hags and boggy patches, mixed with rocky outcrops. These can be soft, spongy, and very wet after rain. On the cliffs & corries you will find steeper rocky sections with loose scree near lakes and coums (like Coumshingaun and Coum Iarthar). Ground near rivers and tarns can be very soft, with mossy, saturated peat. So, expect a mix of wet bog, rough grass, heather, and rocky ground, with occasional steep scrambles depending on what walk you choose. Please ensure you have walking gear for all weather with you, including hiking boots with good ankle support and gaiters as the terrain on some of the walks is steep and can be challenging.

Please note that a bus will be provided for some walks and other walks will require participants to carpool.

There are walks for all abilities and all will be led by members of the Sliabh Hiking Club who are very familiar with the area and will be ready with local stories and insights! There will also be an environmental walk, a training session, and climbing with staff from Mountaineering Ireland on offer on the Saturday. Please read through the descriptions of all the activities outlined below before you start the online registration process as you will be asked for your activity selection when registering online.

To purchase a map of the Comeragh Mountains go to:

<https://eastwestmapping.ie/product/comeragh/>

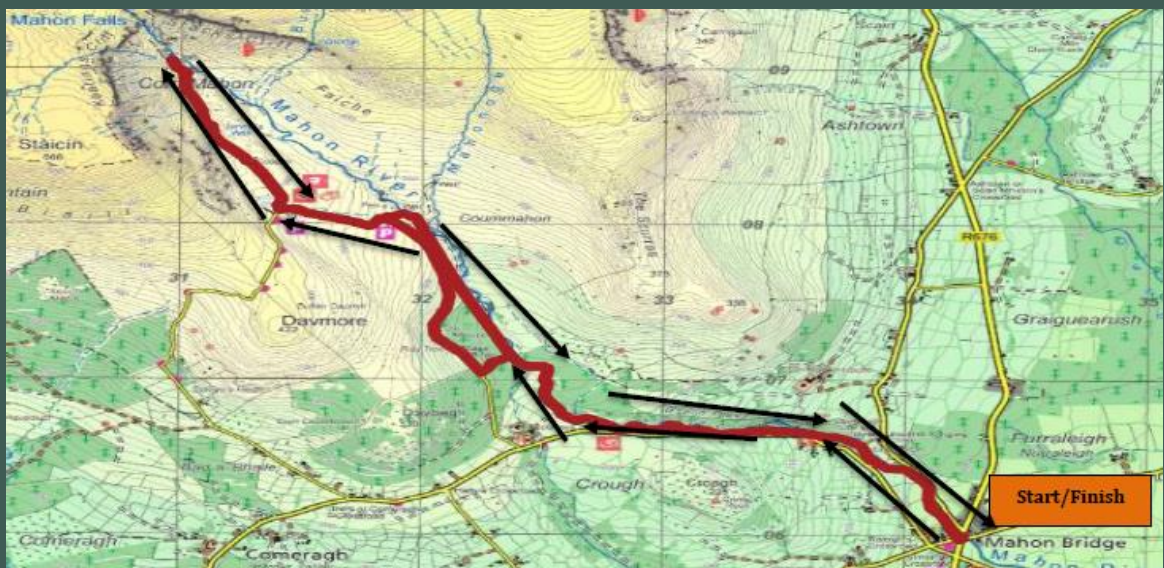
Choose from:
Easy Walks

Walk 1. Croagh Wood to Mahon Falls

A gentle track from Croagh Wood down towards the thundering Mahon Falls. The route runs through quiet woodland and open ground, before opening to one of the most dramatic views in the Comeraghs. We will start & finish beside Croagh Coffee so time to relax after we get the views with a sweet treat. (Car Pool)

Distance: 10km, Height Gain: 342m, Duration: 3 hrs

Route Link: <https://hiiker.app/maps/planned-trails/walk-1-croagh-wood-to-mahon-falls--370169>



Walk 2. Ned Currans

Named after a local character, this loop explores upland and quiet ridges. It carries the spirit of old farming life, with wide horizons and the sound of the river close by. Expect a great history along this route.



Distance: 6km, Height Gain: 295m, Duration: 2.5 – 3. Hours (Car Pool)

Route Link: <http://hiiker.app/maps/planned-trails/walk-2-ned-currans--1303430389>

Walk 3. Boolas Loop

The Boolas Loop is a wild circuit high above the Nire Valley, circling the corrie lakes of-known locally as “The Boolas.” These dark, glacial hollows sit beneath steep cliffs, carved out in the Ice Age, and are among the most dramatic features in the Comeraghs. It’s a walk full of mountain atmosphere, where the cliffs rise sheer and the water lies still and deep.



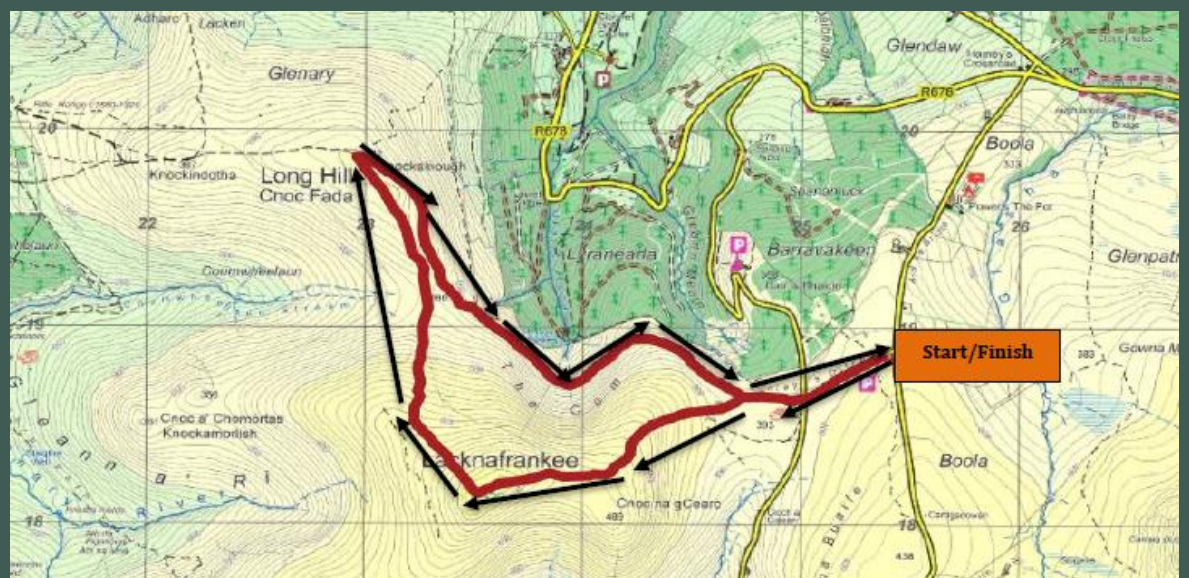
Distance: 9 km, Height Gain: 353m, Duration: 3 Hours (Car Pool)

Route Link: <https://hiiker.app/trails/ireland/county-waterford/boolas-loop>

Moderate Walks

Walk 4. Lacknafrankie Loop

A classic Comeraghs walk over open bogland and heather ridges. It’s a place of big skies, grazing sheep, and sweeping 360 views that stretch across the Comeraghs.



Distance: 7 km, Height Gain: 311m, Duration: 3 Hrs (Car Pool)

Link: <https://hiiker.app/maps/planned-trails/walk-4-lacknafrankie-loop-789074/edit>

Walk 5. Nire Valley Walk

Starting deep in the valley, this route rises past glacial lakes and hanging corries. It's a favourite with walkers for its mix of wild beauty and mountain drama.



Distance: 10km, Height Gain: 565m, Duration: 3 Hours (Car Pool)

Route Link: <http://hiiker.app/maps/planned-trails/walk-5-nire-valley-walk--902019530>

Walk 6. Mahon Falls Loop

A short loop with big rewards. The path brings you close to the falls, through rocky slopes and grassy flats, with the 'Magic Road' illusion nearby to test the senses. We may vary the route on the day depending on weather conditions.



Distance: 6km, Height Gain: 499m, Duration: 3 Hrs (Car Pool)

Route Link: <https://hiiker.app/maps/planned-trails/walk-6-mahon-falls-loop--163450>

Difficult Walks

Walk 7. Seefin Loop

Seefin, “the seat of Finn,” looks out over Waterford and Tipperary. The looped trail climbs through open hillside, carrying echoes of folklore and rebel gatherings.

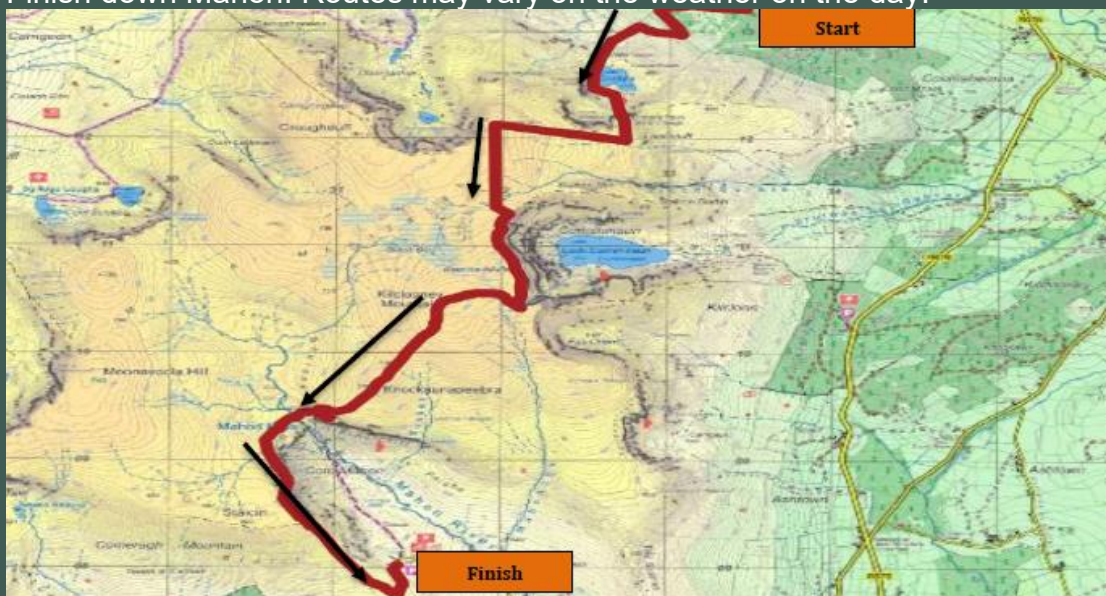


Distance: 16km, Height Gain: 871m, Duration: 6 Hours (Car Pool)

Route Link: <http://hiker.app/maps/planned-trails/walk-7-seefin-loop--1876180153>

Walk 8. Crotty's to Mahon

Looking for a view of two of the most stunning lakes in Ireland? A dramatic look at Coumshingaun, one of Ireland's finest corrie lakes. Then at Crotty's where the cliffs were once the hiding place of outlaw William Crotty, and still feel wild and untamed. Finish down Mahon. Routes may vary on the weather on the day.



Distance: 10km, Height Gain: 739m, Duration: 5 Hour (Bus)

Route Link: <http://hiker.app/maps/planned-trails/walk-8-crotty's-coumshingaun--777528420>

Walk 9

Mahon to Coumshingaun Loop

A high-level traverse linking two icons of the Comeraghs. From the crashing waters of Mahon Falls to the sheer bowl of Coumshingaun, this is mountain walking at its best. We may vary the route on the day depending on the weather.



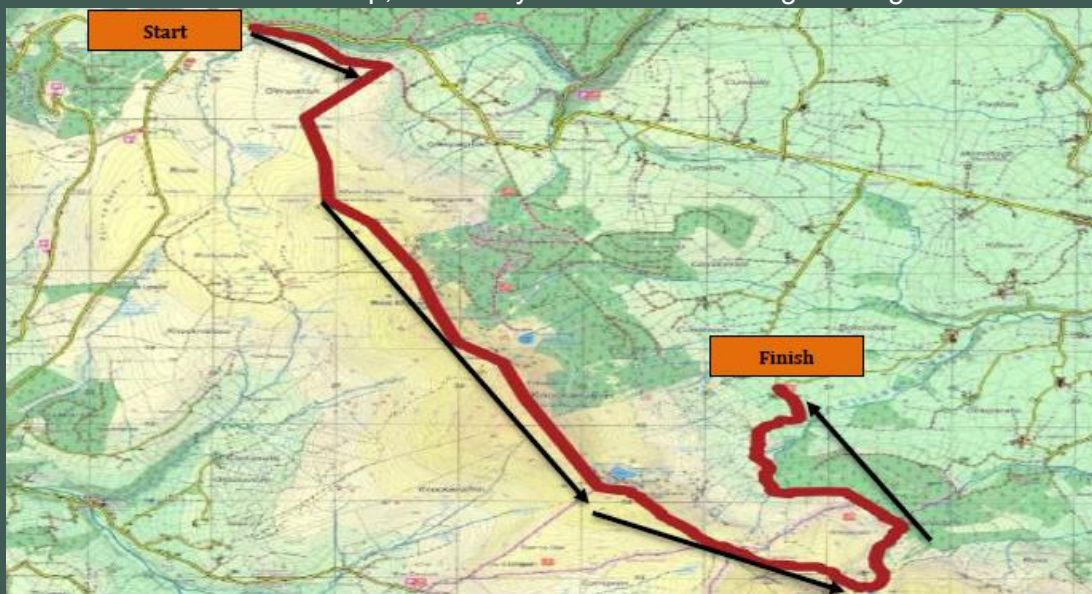
Distance: 12km, Height Gain: 786m Duration: 5 Hrs (Car Pool)

Route Link: <http://hiker.app/maps/planned-trails/walk-9-mahon-falls-to-coumshingaun-738564084>

Walk 10

Knockanaffrin Ridge Walk

An airy ridge with far-reaching views, Knockanaffrin is steeped in history. The “Hill of the Mass” recalls hidden worship, and today it offers one of the great ridge walks of Ireland.



Distance 15k Height Gain: 740 m Duration: 6 Hrs (Bus)

Route Link: <http://hiker.app/maps/planned-trails/walk-10-knockanaffrin-ridge-walk-372600215>

Environmental Hike

Mountain Environment Walk in the Comeraghs with local photographer, mountain leader and wildlife enthusiast Mario Mac Rory and Mountaineering Ireland's Access & Environment Manager, Helen Lawless. The route will be finalised closer to the time depending on weather and ground conditions, but is likely to include steep and rugged terrain

To help spread the knowledge shared on this walk, we would like to keep it to one person per club, ideally the Club Environmental Officer, or another member with an interest in the environment.

Scrambling Workshop

Our Training Officer Jane Carney 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.

Climbing Workshop

Join our Climbing Development Officer Michael Duffy and Performance Lead Eimir McSwiggan. Ability Level - Anyone welcome, ideally with some previous climbing experience. What to bring:

Packed lunch, outdoor clothing, waterproofs, rock shoes and own climbing gear if you have it. Ratio 2:10.

Saturday Evening

18.30 Mountaineering Ireland Members' Forum – The Park Hotel

The members' forum is open to all Mountaineering Ireland 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 for any member to make suggestions or ask questions related to hillwalking, climbing and the work of Mountaineering Ireland, either individually or on behalf of your club. It is a valuable information-sharing opportunity. 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 members' forum and bring feedback to your club afterwards. Tea and coffee will be served.

20.00 – Dinner in the Park Hotel (please make sure to choose this option at registration if you would like to attend the dinner). If you would like to amend your booking to include / exclude the dinner, please email christina@mountaineering.ie.

Sunday 13th October

10.00 – Please sign up for the workshop when registering online.

Regional Club Support Workshop

These in-person events are designed to bring clubs together at a local level to share ideas, address common challenges, and build stronger connections across the hillwalking and climbing community. Each meeting will provide a relaxed and informative setting where members can network with other clubs in their area, gain valuable insights from Mountaineering Ireland staff, and engage in open discussion on topics relevant to their club's development and day-to-day running.

If there is a particular area, you would like to discuss or get information on please send an email to ruth@mountaineering.ie beforehand so we can prepare the necessary material.

As always, there is the option to walk or climb independently on Sunday morning.

12.00 – Members can disperse once their workshop is over.



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