



Annual Review 2008

www.mountaineering.ie

The Mountaineering Council of Ireland Comhairle Sléibhteoireachta na hÉireann

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Mountaineering Council of Ireland Board 2008

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Ruairí Ó Conchúir *Chairperson*

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Board Oiliúint Sléibhe /

Irish Mountain Training Board Members 2008

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Dawson Stelfox

Angela Carlin *Secretary*

(*Youth Development Officer NI, MCI*)



The MCI promotes the principles of Leave No Trace
We support and operate the Irish Government's Cycle to Work initiative

Photography by:

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Ruairí Ó Conchúir

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MCI Annual Review 2008

The MCI (Mountaineering Council of Ireland) is the representative body for hill walkers and climbers in Ireland. It is recognised as the NGB (National Governing Body) for mountaineering by both the Irish Sports Council (ISC) and Sport Northern Ireland (SNI). Mountaineering includes hill walking, rock climbing, rambling, bouldering and alpinism. We currently have some 9,500 members, comprising over 130 clubs and 1,200 individual members.

The key aims of the MCI are to:

- Represent the interests of walkers and climbers
- Improve and secure access to the Irish hills and crags
- Promote mountain training programmes and qualifications
- Encourage responsible and sustainable use of the mountain environment
- Support members, and especially young people, in skills development
- Provide appropriate services to members

The MCI is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors, elected by the membership. We have a professional staff team based at Sport HQ, Park West Business Park in Dublin, and at Tollymore Mountain Centre in County Down.

The work of the MCI includes: promoting mountaineering activities in Ireland; providing a range of services to members; promoting safety and training to walkers and climbers and encouraging responsible use of the mountain environment.

Membership of the MCI is open to both clubs and individuals.
For more information visit www.mountaineering.ie/join

The MCI maintains close cooperation with international organisations such as the British Mountaineering Council (BMC), the Mountaineering Council of Scotland (MCofS), and the Union Internationale des associations d'Alpinisme' (UIAA)

Stuart Garland
Chief Officer



The MCI gratefully acknowledges the funding it receives from
The Irish Sports Council • Sport Northern Ireland • Women in Sport



"I am extremely hopeful that the MCI will continue to grow and develop over the next number of years. What gives me that hope is what I see on the hills, crags, valleys and mountains of Ireland week in week out. Young and old, Irish, and those new to Ireland, who love the sport of mountaineering."

Chairperson's Address

Welcome to the MCI and welcome to this a celebration of your organisations achievements in 2008. In many respects 2008 was a year of renewal of the core values and guiding principles of the MCI. It was also a year of growth within the MCI with new staff members finding their feet and engaging with members. The Board is extremely proud of the achievements of the MCI which are outlined in considerable detail in this annual report.

I want to thank all MCI volunteers - those who sit on the Board and its various committees and those individuals who remind us, through giving so generously of their time and skills, just why it is we care so much about mountaineering. This has been proven so many during the year. By the Cork Mountaineering Club hosting a wonderful Autumn meet in West Cork, by so many others supporting young people on the hills and by voluntary trainers promoting the principles of Leave No Trace. I want to thank all MCI staff – some who are new to their positions - all of whom are deeply committed to supporting you to get the most out of the MCI. The staff have shown professionalism and dedication to their work areas within MCI.

MCI members are to be congratulated for their active engagement throughout 2008 and for travelling the long journey with us in developing a new five year Strategic Development Plan. This work has resulted in the development of a comprehensive road map of where we want to see the MCI going with detailed yearly work-plans to achieve this.

Despite the MCI's new five year strategic development plan the Board is uncertain about the future. Given the severe deterioration in public finances there is little doubt that the implementation of the plan will be long and difficult journey. The Board is also anxious about whether this generation of young and not so young Irish mountaineers will be in a position to pass on what's best about the MCI and our sport to our children. As outlined by MCI President Alan Tees, mountaineering is fundamentally about people and about friendships. It is about giving back to the sport. Mountaineering, hill-walking, rock climbing, rambling and bouldering remain

by far the largest participative sport in Ireland. Our sport also remains one of the cheapest sports to participate in and gain from. But we need more volunteers to drive the sport forward. We need people across Ireland – North and South - to take up leadership roles within clubs. At an individual level we need volunteers, more so than ever before, to encourage young people out onto the hills and see the wonderful and lifelong benefits mountaineering has to offer.

Despite these concerns, we have committed and visionary funders in the Irish Sports Council and Sport Northern Ireland to whom we are very grateful. I am extremely hopeful that the MCI will continue to grow and develop over the next number of years. What gives me that hope is what I see on the hills, crags, valleys and mountains of Ireland week in week out. Young and old, Irish, and those new to Ireland, who love the sport of mountaineering. Our love of the mountains is the thread that binds us together in common effort to promote our sport within the wider community. Our climb will be steep and all that I can ask is that you help 'your' MCI meet the challenges that lie ahead.

It has been a tremendous privilege to serve as MCI Chairperson during this period of great growth and change within the MCI. We have a dedicated and professional staff and a deeply committed voluntary Board. Finally, I want to remember those MCI members who have died mountaineering in Ireland, Europe and further afield during 2008 – may they rest in peace.

Ruairí Ó Conchúir
MCI Chairperson



"There is a benefit more valuable to me than anything listed in Irish Mountain Log, and that is, the friends I have made through the MCI. I always enjoyed meeting others with similar interests, particularly making friends from other Irish clubs."

President's Address

This has been a big year for the MCI. The 5 year strategic development plan, and other events and developments during the year are dealt with elsewhere, but the big challenge for the board will be to get the main body of the membership to value, and take ownership of their organisation.

Those who attended the Summer Alpine Meet 2008 cannot but appreciate the effort that put in to make their trip rewarding, however, there are other such events throughout the year; The Autumn Gathering, Spring Meet, and now the Scottish Winter Meet, are similarly worthwhile, but we need more members to attend.

Financially, I consider my subscription to be very good value indeed (and go into this in detail in the Irish Mountain Log) and without the provision of Personal Accident and Civil Liability insurance, our member clubs might find it difficult to persuade individuals to lead walks, or indeed take office.

Some organisations offer cheaper, but inferior, cover. According to the last Ulster Federation of Rambling Clubs newsletter, their cover only applies during organised club events. There is no Personal Accident cover, and the upper limit for claims is currently only one fifth of our own.

Of course there are lots of other things the MCI do, guide book publication, advise on access/conservation issues, training support, BMC travel & activity insurance, all of which I have benefited from at one time or another, but the MCI, as a diverse organisation does tend to suffer from having to be "all things to all men", and is unlikely to be as focussed on hillwalking issues as, say the UFRC.

But there is a benefit more valuable to me than anything listed in Irish Mountain Log, and that is, the friends I have made through the MCI. I always enjoyed meeting others with similar interests, particularly making friends from other Irish clubs.

The MCI Board see the value of inter-club links, and are trying to encourage them, by the setting up of 'regional focus groups', the aim being to get local clubs to meet up and do things together, talk about issues, and provide feedback to the Board so that they can more properly represent the aspirations of the membership. Margaret has been asked to help set this up in the North West, and rather than organise (probably ill-attended) meetings through official channels, she has adopted the strategy of organising active social weekends away, partly through our existing network of contacts, with the hope that these people will spread the word. So far it seems to be working.

There seems also to be a widespread perception of the MCI as some remote third party, a "Mountaineering Big Brother" who takes our money, and regulates, rather than represents us. We must do whatever it takes to change this perception!

The reality is that it is we, the club and individual members, who are the MCI, and therefore what we do, is what the MCI does. If the MCI were a cruise liner, Stuart and the staff would be the crew, but they need direction from us, the passengers, as to where we want the ship to go, and this is the role of the elected board, to represent your aspirations. The consultative meetings which took place around the country in 2008, were organised to ascertain the preference of the passengers for the next 5 year strategic "Cruise".

Alan Tees
President



Access and Conservation

Access and Conservation Committee

The access and conservation committee has been integral in working towards a solution to the damage being caused by recreational quads in the uplands. We recently researched and wrote an article about this issue, the current attitude toward dealing with it and the MCI view of what needs to happen to help prevent the environmental degradation that is occurring. It was through this article that Mary White, TD for the Green Party made contact to discuss this problem and then used it as a reference to her argument for greater protection of the uplands during a debate in Dáil Éireann.

Representation of MCI Members

Comhairle na Tuaithe (CnaT)

MCI is currently represented on three committees under the heading of Comhairle na Tuaithe. We continue to be an active participant of the main CnaT committee which in the last year has seen unprecedented movement and progression. During 2008, CnaT launched the Trail Maintenance Scheme. Under the scheme, participating landowners will be paid for carrying out a range of work, including water management, vegetation control, surface and structure maintenance and litter clearance on paths that are on their land. This scheme is being rolled out in a number of areas around Ireland and is receiving very positive feedback from those involved as well as a lot of interest from landowners wanting to become involved. MCI also represents mountaineers on the legal sub-committee and the implementation of the recreation strategy sub-committee.

Irish Uplands Forum (IUF)

The Irish Uplands Forum has experienced a dramatic amount of growth and progress in the last year as well. They hosted a seminar titled Local Involvement in Countryside Management in partnership with the Wicklow Uplands Council. They also sponsored a trip to Austria to look at countryside management and have subsequently produced a report on their visit. Most excitingly, the IUF have found themselves in a position to advertise a

twelve month post for a Research Officer. The purpose of the post is to investigate the current social, economic and environmental issues affecting landscapes and communities in upland areas of the Republic of Ireland. They are also currently developing a website to make their information more readily available to the public.

Dublin Mountains Initiative (DMI)

The MCI relies heavily on volunteer involvement and a place where we see the benefit of this is in the Dublin Mountains Initiative. The MCI has been represented for a number of years on this committee by a volunteer and we are currently seeing the hours of hard work come to fruition. The DMI recently played an integral role, with a number of other interested parties, in the creation of the Dublin Mountains Partnership. This partnership is developing an integrated plan for the area, linking existing and potential outdoor recreation components – in particular forests and other public state owned lands, with the ultimate aim of improving the recreational experience for users of the Dublin Mountains.

Leave No Trace

MCI is a firm believer and promoter of the Leave No Trace Outdoor principles program. In the last year we have really worked to promote this message amongst the members of MCI and the greater public, through training courses, publishing information in the Irish Mountain Log and the dispersion of information at a variety of events. In the last year we have run six awareness sessions and three trainers' courses. In January 2009 we will be creating a schedule of planned Leave No Trace courses. If you feel your club or area would benefit from participation in one of these events please make contact with us and register your interest.

Environmental Officers Network

We held our first Environmental Officers training workshop at the MCI Autumn meet in Macroom. The workshop consisted of; a presentation and discussion on occupiers liability, a Leave No Trace awareness session and a discussion about the local issues and solutions used by clubs in different areas. Each environmental officer was also given an information pack with a variety of resources regarding best practice and environmental impacts. The workshop was very well attended and the participants stated that this was a worthwhile program. MCI plans to run a number of these workshops in different locations all around Ireland in 2009 so if you are interested please make contact with the Access & Conservation Officer. Also, if your club does not yet have an Environmental Officer we would be happy in assisting you in filling that position within your club.

"MCI is a firm believer and promoter of the Leave No Trace Outdoor principles program. In the last year we have really worked to promote this message amongst the members of MCI and the greater public"



Policy Development

Walking Festivals/Challenge Walks

MCI has updated and revised the walking festivals/challenge walks policy. With a lot of input from Leave No Trace we have come up with a document that can assist organisers in planning an event that causes the least amount of environmental damage possible while still having an enjoyable event. This document was published in the Winter 2008 Irish Mountain Log.

Access Policy

MCI has also done some work on updating our access policy. Earlier this year we produced a leaflet with the revised policy. Please feel free to contact us if you would like to receive a copy of this document or go on our website and take a look in the Access and Conservation section.

Support for Club Initiatives and Projects

The access and conservation officer has also been involved in a number of local club initiatives such as clean up days, access queries and much more. If you feel that the access and conservation officer could support your club in a project that it has undertaken please feel free to contact the MCI office to discuss the idea with us. We would be delighted to help in any way we can.





Communications and Services

"There has been an interest in working closer with the MCI with members coming forward as volunteers. We continue to look for Representatives in each club who will be a point of contact for the MCI and club members alike and very importantly to have an agreed Regional Representative in each region."

2008 has been a busy year for MCI in terms of services we delivered to members. The MCI web site, www.mountaineering.ie continues to grow in the numbers of visitors it receives each month. In 2008 we had 1,272,042 page views to the web site and over 8 million hits. Our monthly e-zine Mountaineering Matters has grown both in terms of its content and subscribers. Work is currently underway on a number of additional features that we will add to the web site in the coming months. Our quarterly membership magazine The Irish Mountain Log has also received a makeover in terms of the design and style during summer 2008 and now features more content from the MCI Staff and Volunteers. The circulation of the Irish Mountain Log has also grown in 2008.

A series of 17 Area Focus Groups took place around the country in 2008, meeting with clubs and individual members to discuss issues at local and regional level around the country. The increased number reflected the consultation phase for the MCI's Strategic Development Plan 2009-2013.

2008 saw MCI participate in a number of public exhibitions to promote the organisation to non-members and to encourage safe and sustainable activities in mountainous areas. Our biggest event during the year was our stand at the National Ploughing Championships which took place in Kilkenny during September. We also had an exhibition stand at the following events; the Belfast Adventure Show, the Lifestyle Sports - Adidas Dublin Marathon Expo, Scouting Ireland's National Conference, the Sport Northern Ireland Living the Adventure Conference, Dublin Mountains Partnership launch, as well as the rounds of the Irish Bouldering League.

Our membership discount scheme continued to grow in 2008 and there are now in excess of 80 retailers and accommodation providers amongst others who offer discounts on the presentation of a valid MCI membership card.

There was a number of club visits. The objective was to spread the word about MCI's staff and volunteer roles, to get feedback and offer support to clubs. Areas of interest have ranged from what the MCI is doing day to day for members, how to develop a club, insurance, youth involvement in clubs and what the responsibilities of leaders are.

There has been an interest in working closer with the MCI with members coming forward as volunteers. We continue to look for Representatives in each club who will be a point of contact for the MCI and club members alike and very importantly to have an agreed Regional Representative in each region.

We have continued to develop our relationships with other organisations including: Leave No Trace Ireland, Countryside Access and Activities Network (CAAN), Ulster Federation of Rambling Clubs (UFRC), Comhairle Na Tuaithe (CnaT), Coillte, Dublin Mountains Initiative (DMI), Dublin Mountains Partnership (DMP), the Irish Mountain Rescue Association (IMRA), Local Sports Partnerships and Community Forums amongst others.

We have had number of articles in print media as a consequence of MCI press releases. Our articles in Walking World Ireland magazine have continued to prosper during 2008. These articles highlight the wide spectrum of people involved in the MCI and their pursuits in Ireland and overseas.

The MCI Spring Meet took place in April 2008 in Glendalough, County Wicklow and features a series of walks and climbs for people of all abilities. In addition there was a lecture in the evening with Clive Roberts and a night and dawn hike. Many thanks to the MCI clubs involved for their support in making the evening a great success.

The MCI Autumn Meet took place in October 2008 in Macroom, County Cork and was hosted by Cork Mountaineering Club who did an exceptional job in hosting us all that weekend. On Friday evening we had a bat talk, on Saturday a full complement of mountaineering activities during the day was followed by an EGM to adopt our new Strategic Development Plan, a BOS meeting. The evening meal was followed by and an audio visual presentation by Pat Falvey. On Sunday there was a Leave No Trace Workshop and an opportunity to have a go at climbing on the mobile climbing wall.





Training

"The appointment of the part-time post of MCI training administrator in July 2008 unquestionably aided the evolution and promotion of projects, allowing for a significantly stronger training and safety structure to be delivered."

Reviewing 2008 MCI training related matters, probably the two most significant aspects were consolidations made to the permanent staffing structure and the continuing voluntary support from members and providers. The full-time position of MCI Training Officer became firmly embedded within the delivery and development of the MCI training policy through a number of newly implemented projects. The appointment of the part-time post of MCI training administrator in July 2008 unquestionably aided the evolution and promotion of such projects, allowing for a significantly stronger training and safety structure to be delivered.

Workshops – Promoting continuing personal & professional development

The regular delivery of training workshops throughout the year opened up opportunities for both further personal and professional development to approved Bord Oiliúint Sléibhe (BOS) trainers and candidates within the formal qualification structure. These workshops also provided opportunities for the MCI to present updated current policy and gather essential feedback.

In 2008 the new Volunteer Training Officer (VTO) initiative was set up in response to clubs' requests for members' training. In response, BOS is working toward having a VTO in all MCI-affiliated clubs and ran two extremely successful weekend workshops in November.

Mountaineering Meets - Social gatherings for like-minded mountaineers

2008 saw the growth of the MCI's four annual meets; the Scottish Winter Meet, the Summer Alpine Meet and the spring and autumn home meets. The Training Office played a major role in all four events, providing opportunities for both formal and informal courses through a range of mountaineering interests and levels.

MCI Taster Sessions – Encouraging the public to expand their horizons

Throughout July and August a new initiative was developed to encourage members of the public to sample mountain activities they may not have had prior access to. Delivered on a voluntary basis by many of our affiliated outdoor education centres and training providers, the taster sessions in hill-walking and rock-climbing promoted outdoor activities and encouraged individuals to try out a new hobby.

MCI Training Grants – Supporting members' training

Training related grants continued to be distributed in a somewhat more cautious manner providing necessary support to both club and individual members.

BOS Scheme Awards – Providing an internationally approved structure of qualifications

A general increase in scheme registrations resulted in increased numbers attending formal training and assessment courses in all BOS leadership awards.

There was also a healthy uptake from Irish candidates progressing towards international leadership and instructional qualifications that are essential to the continuation of the support structure that BOS requires for its national qualification system.

In 2008 the Mountain Skills scheme was refurbished. While the core curriculum and structure remains broadly the same, the introduction of a new log book/syllabus pack brings the scheme in line with the system of other BOS awards.



BOS Provider Agreement & Moderation – The upkeep & development of standards within formal training

Over the last 12 months, BOS has developed a policy structure that will allow for a professional support system to be administered throughout its training and assessment schemes. Created in line with Irish Sports Council's policies, this will deliver clear, beneficial guidelines for both trainers and trainees following the formally recognised training structure.

One outcome of this has been a redrafting of the training administration system. This will not only result in a more efficient organisational structure including the moderation of award courses, but will also deliver greater support for providers and a more rational approach to fees.

International links – Recognition & approval of BOS qualifications beyond the Republic of Ireland

Representatives from the Board of BOS attended a number of meetings and training seminars in 2008 organised by the UIAA, Mountain Leader Training UK and the Association of Mountaineering Instructors. This continuing international affiliation promotes a well-run and resourceful link to other mountaineering federations' training systems.

The Adventure Sport Instructor Training & Accreditation Framework

The MCI continued to assist and participate within the proposed development of the Irish Sports Council's national framework. Particular acknowledgement must be made to Tomás Aylward, chairperson to the Board of BOS, and Dave Gaughran, the MCI's representative within the steering group for volunteering many hours in the interests of the MCI.

Development Structures - Options for the future development & implementation of administration structures relating to mountain training within the island of Ireland

In autumn 2008 the MCI engaged the services of Adventure Activity Associates Ltd to produce an options appraisal for the potential future administration structure of mountain training in Ireland. This work was completed in December and delivered to a joint MCI/BOS Board meeting. The two Boards concluded that it would be beneficial for the MCI and BOS to further develop possible links with the Mountain Leader Training Northern Ireland Board.

Conclusion

2008 has been an active year for mountain training in Ireland. Through all practical aspects we witnessed an increased participation across the broad range of different training projects initiated and delivered. Acknowledgement must be made to both the willingness of participants to attend and the many hours of voluntary professionalism provided to support these initiatives. Beyond the practical aspects of mountain training delivery we have seen the development of a more substantial administration system that will allow for a far more acceptable support structure to be moderated both internally by its users and externally on a national and international level.

Thank you to all involved during this sometimes rocky journey to improvement.



Youth

"The MCI has been working to create opportunities for young people to join or form clubs. In 2008 the MCI worked with Sligo Sport and Recreation Partnership under the Irish Sports Council's Women in Sport programme to offer teenage girls in Sligo the chance to take part in a six month programme of indoor climbing and hillwalking."

The MCI Northern Ireland Youth Development Programme has gone from strength to strength in 2008. The programme has focused on a number of areas: Developing a good network of regular indoor climbing opportunities and clubs for young people, running training events to develop higher level climbing and mountaineering skills and developing youth competition climbing.

Indoor climbing classes and clubs.

It is clear that for many young people getting regular access to a climbing wall or having an opportunity to join a mountaineering club can be a problem.

The MCI run classes for young climbers and offer support, advice and training to climbing walls to develop their own youth programmes. This has included running our own MCI youth classes at Hotrock Climbing Wall at Tollymore Mountain Centre and running a programme of classes at The Ozone Climbing Wall, Belfast (on behalf of the Belfast City Council). We have also provided training to instructors who work with young climbers at Queens University PEC and University College Dublin Climbing Wall, Dublin. In 2008 MCI hosted the first ever Climbing Wall Managers' Seminar- the event had an emphasis on youth, with a presentation on youth development by Scott Muir (Extreme Dream Climbing Wall, Aviemore) and the launch of NICAS (National Indoor Climbing Achievement Scheme) in Ireland.

The MCI has also been working to create opportunities for young people to join or form clubs. In 2008 the MCI worked with Sligo Sport and Recreation Partnership under the Irish Sports Council's Women in Sport programme to offer teenage girls in Sligo the chance to take part in a six month programme of indoor climbing and hillwalking.

We hope to build on this project in 2009 to form a youth mountaineering club in the area. The MCI are also assisting the creation of new youth climbing and mountaineering clubs in through schools and climbing walls and offering support to existing MCI clubs in developing youth sections.

Advanced Youth Training in Mountaineering and Climbing

In 2008 we ran 2 major events to offer training to young people in Scottish Winter Mountaineering and Alpine Climbing.

The 2008 Scottish Winter Training was a 2 phase scheme; applicants attended a training and selection weekend at Tollymore Mountain Centre on the first weekend of January, which covered essential mountaineering skills such as navigation and roped scrambling. Following successful completion of this course applicants were offered an opportunity to attend subsidised training in Scotland in March 2008. The six day course, based in the Cairngorm Mountains gave a good overview of the skills needed for winter mountaineering, including avalanche awareness and emergency shelter building, as well as giving students the opportunity to climb winter routes, with the guidance of qualified instructors.

The MCI Youth Alpine Meet was an initiative to bring a youth element to the already very successful MCI Summer Alpine Meet. The first action was to gather together a number of MCI volunteers who had considerable Alpine experience and who were willing to help. We then invited applications from young people throughout Ireland and asked them to attend two training weekends, one based in the Mourne Mountains, County Down and one based in Glendalough, County Wicklow.



The training weekends were tailored to suit the needs and abilities of each applicant, and by the end, everyone had made great progress, with many participants completing a first lead climb or a first multi-pitch. Following the completion of the training weekends, 16 young people accepted an offer to attend the MCI Youth Alpine Meet which took place in Vicosoprano, Switzerland in July 2008. Throughout the meet the young climbers were able to climb with experienced volunteers, under the guidance of Dawson Stelfox and Robbie Fenlon, both UIAGM guides and youth meet volunteers. Everyone who took part was very impressed by the success of the event and it is hoped that the meet may be repeated bi-annually.

Youth Competition Climbing

The MCI youth climbing competition series ran for the first time in 2007-08 and included both bouldering and lead climbing. In 2009, the Northern Ireland series will align its dates and rules with the British Mountaineering Council (BMC) competitions and Northern Ireland competitors will have the opportunity to take part in the United Kingdom final.

The Northern Ireland Youth Climbing Team had great success in 2008, both in competition climbing and on real rock. Top achievements include young members completing sport routes of 7b, high placing in UK competition and impressive traditional climbing at Fair Head by former team members.

On 6th December MCI also held a Northern Ireland talent identification day, supported by Sport Northern Ireland, in order to identify and offer further coaching to young climbers who show an interest in competitive climbing. These young climbers have now commenced a 3 month coaching programme leading up to the 2009 'Youth Climbing Series'.





Resources

"As we come to the end of the financial year we are aware of potential cuts in funding to voluntary organisations along with the economic downturn we have started to focus on increasing levels of non state funding."

The main focus of work during 2008 was the consultation, devising, compilation and finally the adoption of the MCI's new Strategic Development Plan for 2009 – 2013. The plan was adopted at an EGM held in Macroom in County Cork on Saturday 11 October 2008. The strategy sets out a clear vision for the future growth and promotion of all aspects of mountaineering in Ireland with a major focus on supporting clubs and individual members who are primarily engaged in hill walking together with enhanced support for youth participation in our sport.

The post of part-time Training Administrator was created in 2008 to support the role of Training Officer. There was a small increase in the membership fee to reflect the increases in postage costs related to the distribution of the Irish Mountain Log, subsequent to the increase being adopted there were two further increases during the year which have affected our costs.

The first stage of our Equality Monitoring Survey got underway on our web site. This will help us to identify gaps and niches within MCI where there is under representation of a minority group or age category. Members participation in this survey will aid MCI to be more responsive to the needs of its members.

With the appointment of a new Honorary Treasurer in 2008 the MCI financial management systems were once again reviewed early in 2007 and a new financial policy was adopted in line with good practice in the sector.

As we come to the end of the financial year we are aware of potential cuts in funding to voluntary organisations along with the economic downturn we have started to focus on increasing levels of non state funding. Our focus will be on increased revenue to help subsidise our services and events run during the year. Preliminary proposals were developed in September

2008 in relation to the development of a Mountain Resource Centre and work will continue in 2009.

Work on a new MCI Climbing Walls Strategy and the MCI Climbing Wall Managers Manual is ongoing. A number of new resources for young people involved in mountaineering and their parents / guardians are also in development at the moment.

We would like to thank all our club committees for their dedication and essential contribution to the club scene. Much appreciation goes to the MCI volunteers for their invaluable efforts that impact so much on how the MCI operates at national, regional and local level. Volunteers are involved in every area of the MCI from: writing articles, organising events, representing MCI at festivals and events, sitting on committees and steering groups and sitting on the MCI Board. If you have an interest in being an MCI volunteer or representative for your club or region please don't hesitate to contact the MCI Office. A list of current volunteer opportunities can be found on our web site.



External Representation

The MCI is represented on the following organisations:

Coillte Social and Environmental Panel,
Comhairle Na Tuaithe,
Cork Walking Cycling Network,
County Cork Local Sports Partnership,
Dublin Mountains Initiative,
Irish Adventure Sports Training Trust,
Irish Mountain Rescue Association,
Irish Uplands Forum,
Leave No Trace Ireland,
Mountain Coordination Group
(UK and Ireland),
Mountain Heritage Trust,
Mountain Leader Training NI,
Mountain Leader Training UK,
National Waymarked Ways Committee,
National Co-ordinating Committee for
Cave & Mountain Rescue,
North Sligo/North Leitrim Uplands Group,
Northern Ireland Environment Link,
Sport Northern Ireland Trust
(Tollymore Mountain Centre),
Ulster Way Advisory Group,
Walking Cycling Network,
Wicklow/ Dublin Mountains Board,
Wicklow Mountains National Park
Committee,
Wicklow Uplands Council.

Affiliations

The MCI is affiliated to the following organisations:

European Ramblers Association,
Federation of Irish Sports,
Leave No Trace Ireland,
Northern Ireland Environmental Link,
Northern Ireland Sports Forum,
Union Internationale des Association
d'Alpinisme (UIAA),
The Wheel.

Working relationships

In addition to the above we also work closely with the following organisations:
Access and Conservation Trust (ACT),
British Mountaineering Council (BMC),
Coaching Ireland,
Countryside Access and Activities Network for Northern Ireland (CAAN),
Irish Sports Council,
Mountaineering Council of Scotland (MCofS),
Mountain Leader Training Northern Ireland (MLTNI),
Mountain Leader Training United Kingdom (MLTUK),
National Trails Office,
Scouting Ireland,
Sport Northern Ireland,
Ulster Federation of Rambling Clubs.

List of MCI Affiliated Clubs

(as of January 2009)

4A's Walking Club
Acara
An Óige Hillwalkers Club
Aonach ar Siúl
Aquinas Award & Hillwalking Group
Arklow and Wicklow Hillwalking Club
Athlone Walking Club

Ballyduff Walking Club
Ballyhoura Bears Mountaineering Club
Ballyvaughan Fanore Walking Club
Bank of Ireland Hill Walking Club
Belfast Association of Rockclimbers and
Fellrunners
Beanna Beola Hillwalking Club
Bishopstown Orienteering and
Hillwalking Club
Blackrock Hillwalking Club
Blackstairs Ramblers
Blayney Ramblers
Bogtrotters Hill Walking Club
Bootleggers
Boyle Curlew Hillwalking Club
Burren Walking Club
Cahirsiveen Outdoor Club
ClíÉ Hillwalkers
CIT Mountaineering Club
Clare Outdoor Club
Clonakilty Walking Club
Clondalkin Hillwalking Club
Club Cualann
Club Siúlóide Chonamara Theas
Cobh Hillwalking Club
Coconuts
Colmcille Climbers
Comeragh Mountaineering Club
Co-op Climbing Club
Cork Backpackers Club
Cork Mountaineering Club
Crannagh Ramblers
Croom Abu
Crossbridge Walking Club
Crows Hillwalkers
Cumann Siúl Cois Coiribe
Cumann Sléibhteoireachta
- Annascaul Walkers
Cumann Sléibhteoireachta Chorca
Dhuibhne - Dingle Hillwalking Club
Dal Riada Climbing Club
DCU Rockclimbing Club
Defence Forces Association of Mountaineers
DIT Mountaineering Club
Dublin University Climbing Club
Dublin Wicklow Mountain Rescue Team
Dungarvan Walking Club
Dunmanway Walking Club
Dunsany Walking Club
Eagle Ramblers Walking Club
ESB Hillwalking Club
Ferrard Ramblers Club
Fineos Hillwalking Club
Fitzambles
Foyle Hillwalking and Rambling Club
Foyle Trekkers
Galtee Walking Club
Galway Field Club
Galway Walking Club
Garda Mountaineering & Canoeing Club
Glanmire Walkers
Glenwalk
GMIT Mountaineering Club
Goya Gang
Grey Lake Ramblers
Hanging Rockers
HF Walking Club Dublin
Imaal Walkers
Irish Mountaineering Club
Institution Mountaineering Club
Irish Christian Mountaineering Club
Irish Geological Association

Irish Quaternary Association IQUA
Kenmare Walking Club
Kerry Garda Hillwalking Club
Killarney Mountaineering Club
Kilmacthomas Walkers
Kilronan Ramblers
Knockadosan Dozen HW
Lar Na Tire Mountaineering Club
Laune Mountaineering Club
Letterkenny IT Hillwalking Society
Limerick Climbing Club
Lung Gumpas
Magee Hillwalking Club
Marley Hillwalkers
Maynooth Hillwalking Club
Mid Tipp Mountaineering Club
Midleton Hillwalking Club
Mountain Meitheal
Muintir Na Sléibhte
Mullaghareirk Ramblers
Na Cnocadóirí
Na Coisithe
Navan Trekkers
Nire Valley Bogtrotters
North Down Ramblers
North West Mayo Hillwalkers
Northern Ireland Youth Climbing Team
NUI Galway Mountaineering Club
North West Mountaineering Club
Out & About
Out & About NI
Owen Roe Ramblers
Ox Mountain Ramblers
Oyster Walking Club
Peacock Ramblers
Peaks Mountaineering Club
Queens University Mountaineering Club
Rainbow Hill Walking Club
Rathgormack Climbing Club
Rosway Walkers
Seaboard Mountaineering Association
Shanganagh Ramblers
Siúl Walking Club
Skibbereen Walking Group
Sléibhteoiri Óga Chairrai
Sliabh Ban Ramblers
Sliabh Luachra Hillwalking Club
Sligo Mountaineering Club
Spartan Red Sox Walking Club
Sperrins Hillwalking Club
St. Kevin's College, Dublin
The Bushcraft Club
The Team Project
The Wayfarers
Tolka Trekkers
Tralee Mountaineering Club
Tredagh Trekkers
Trekkers Mountaineering Club
Tullow Mountaineering Club
Tyndall Mountaineering Club
UCC Mountaineering Club
UCD Mountaineering Club
University of Ulster Jordanstown
Mountaineering Club
Westport Hillwalking and
Mountaineering Club
Wexford Hillwalking Club
Winders Climbing Club
Woolgreen

E&OE



The Mountaineering Council of Ireland Comhairle Sléibhteoireachta na hÉireann

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13 Joyce Way
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Dublin 12
Ireland

Hot Rock Climbing Wall
Tollymore Mountain Centre
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