



**Working for
and representing
hillwalkers
and climbers**

www.mountaineering.ie

ANNUAL REVIEW 2012
Mountaineering Ireland

CONTACT DETAILS

STAFF (SPORT HQ, DUBLIN)

Karl Boyle, Chief Executive Officer
Telephone 00 353 (0)1 625 1115
karl@mountaineering.ie

Terry Canavan, Accounts Administrator
Telephone 00 353 (0)1 625 1115
terry@mountaineering.ie

Una Feeney, Administrator
Telephone 00 353 (0)1 625 1115
una@mountaineering.ie

Helen Lawless, Hillwalking, Access & Conservation Officer
Telephone 00 353 (0)1 625 1115
helen@mountaineering.ie

Neal McQuaid, Talent Development Officer
Telephone 00 353 (0)1 625 1115
neal@mountaineering.ie

Rozanne Bell, Member and Training Support Administrator
Telephone 00 353 (0)1 625 1112
rozanne@mountaineering.ie

Alun Richardson, Training Officer
Telephone 00 353 (0)1 625 1117
alun@mountaineering.ie

Grainne Quinn, Get Ireland Walking Project Manager
Telephone 00 353 (87) 2994687
grainne@getirelandwalking.ie

STAFF (TOLLYMORE MOUNTAIN CENTRE, COUNTY DOWN)

Paul Swail, Youth Development Officer
Telephone 00 44 (0)28 4372 5354
From Rol: 048 4372 5354
paul.swail@mountaineering.ie



Mountaineering Ireland supports the Leave No Trace programme.



MOUNTAINEERING IRELAND BOARD AND SUB COMMITTEES

MOUNTAINEERING IRELAND BOARD 2012

Ursula MacPherson, **President**
Ross Millar, **Chairperson**
David Batt, **Honorary Treasurer**
Sandra Kennedy, **Honorary Secretary**
Paul Barron
Bridget Conway
Susan Jago
Stephen McMullan
Ruairí Ó Conchúir
Patrick O'Sullivan
Dawson Stelfox
Shay Walsh

BORD OILIÚINT SLÉIBHE/IRISH MOUNTAIN TRAINING BOARD MEMBERS 2012

Shay Walsh, **Chairperson**
Andy Callan
Niall Ennis
Colin Gibbon
Ronan Lenihan
Colette Mahon
Charlie McManus
Orla Prendergast
Alun Richardson, **Secretary**

ACCESS & CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEMBERS 2012

Ruairí Ó Conchúir, **Chairperson**
Jack Bergin
Pat Ewen
Vincent McAlinden
Peter Norton
Frank Nugent
Ena Rafferty
Helen Lawless, **Secretary**

Mountaineering Ireland Limited is a Company Limited by Guarantee. Registered in Dublin No 199053.
Registered Office: Sport HQ, 13 Joyce Way, Park West Business Park, Dublin 12, Ireland.

During April 2013 Mountaineering Ireland will move to a new address; Sport HQ, National Sports Campus, Abbotstown, Dublin 15.

CONTENTS

MI ANNUAL REVIEW 2012	2
CHAIRPERSON'S ADDRESS	3
ACCESS AND CONSERVATION	4
YOUTH	8
TALENT DEVELOPMENT	10
MOUNTAIN TRAINING AND SAFE PRACTICE	12
COMMUNICATIONS AND SERVICES	14





“ Helping the Hills was a seminal point in Mountaineering Ireland’s history; a growing realisation that our hills are so vulnerable and the need to bring all stakeholders together to develop a consensus based on the experiences and expertise of all, including lessons learned from path repair in key areas such as the Lake District and Cairngorms ”

MI ANNUAL REVIEW 2012

In 2012, Mountaineering Ireland took a robust position on the future of our forests, the Coillte estate. From the Spring Gathering where you, the Mountaineering Ireland membership, gave the mandate to build an alliance of like-minded organisations to maintain our forests in state ownership, it has been great to see how, both with the help of the Dublin Mountains Initiative and IMPACT, the campaign has developed into a joined-up coherent strategy, Save Our Forests. This alliance will continue until the decision has been reversed and the estate secured in state ownership and control for the future.

Helping the Hills was a seminal point in Mountaineering Ireland’s history; a growing realisation that our hills are so vulnerable and the need to bring all stakeholders together to develop a consensus based on the experiences and expertise of all, including lessons learned from path repair in key areas such as the Lake District and Cairngorms. The conference has led to an action plan which includes a process to agree Upland Path Principles for Ireland.

2012 was a significant year for the planning and development of training schemes. The Trail Walk Leader (TWL) scheme and the Climbing Coach Awards are being developed. The TWL will be piloted in spring 2013 and if the buy-in to date by a wide range of stakeholders is anything to go by, this will be very well received. The Level 1 Climbing Coach award has also been drafted.

More volunteers are doing more than ever before to support greater youth participation in hillwalking and climbing. I am delighted to see the strength of youth hillwalking programmes within guiding and scouting, which we are supporting and the growing youth membership within our clubs.

2012 saw a young climber from Belfast, Dominic Burns win the European Youth Cup and compete in the World Championships. All those that are willing to invest their time for the benefit of the next generation of hillwalker and climber will continue to be supported by Mountaineering Ireland.

Mountaineering Ireland has always, past and present, been fortunate with the calibre of staff employed. Personally, I would like to thank my colleagues for their huge work rate and the passion each and every member of the team brings to their job. I am proud to be part of a team that is loyal and committed to the membership and the many volunteers of Mountaineering Ireland. Membership in 2012 totalled 11,402 members comprising of 163 affiliated clubs with 10,120 members and 1,288 individual members.

Each year the host clubs of the Spring and Autumn Gatherings leave a significant mark on all those that attend. The Peaks Mountaineering Club and The Crows Hillwalkers followed in the same vein as previous host clubs with the warmest of welcomes and a wonderful programme of events. Mountaineering Ireland extends sincere thanks to the many members of both clubs that helped out. Equally, it is always great to get to meet clubs and I would like to thank all those clubs that I and other Mountaineering Ireland staff and volunteers met with in 2012 through regional forums, club workshops, environmental workshops, youth competitions and simply on the hills – let’s keep it going.

Karl Boyle,
Chief Executive Officer



Mountaineering Ireland gratefully acknowledges the funding it receives from The Irish Sports Council, Sport Northern Ireland and the Women in Sport programme.

CHAIRPERSON'S ADDRESS

It is an honour to be asked and subsequently elected by the board members of Mountaineering Ireland to be Chairperson for this term. The efforts of my predecessor, Ruairí Ó Conchúir, have certainly provided a positive culture within the organisation. As Chairperson, I have three primary roles: to support and manage the board of Mountaineering Ireland and our Chief Executive Officer; to ensure our members' interests are reflected in the direction of Mountaineering Ireland; and to ensure appropriate and effective governance within Mountaineering Ireland.

In 2012, there were foundations laid which will have a lasting impact. In particular, the potential of Upland Path Principles for Ireland is fundamentally important to the integrity of our mountain environment. The conference, Helping the Hills, which brought together a broad range of stakeholders can be the catalyst to provide a better future for the mountains of Ireland. I would urge those who have contributed to this effort, to work in partnership and our collective goal can be achieved.

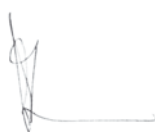
Volunteers are at the core of Mountaineering Ireland, both within clubs and in members' representation on many organisations. Without this commitment we would not be effective. Our staff, who are hugely committed, need us all to support them in their work and this can only be done if members take a lead in their own regions. We have seen great examples of clubs 'pulling together' in the south east, addressing issues on Mount Leinster and the Blackstairs, and other clubs doing likewise elsewhere knowing they had the support of the professional staff to call upon. Whilst we haven't quantified the economic value of volunteers' contributions to Mountaineering Ireland, the commitment of so many, from leadership in clubs, to Mountain Meitheal, the Irish Mountain Log editorial team, Mountain Rescue

Teams and so many other roles, is truly massive and should be recognised so by all.

2013 will see Mountaineering Ireland 'go to the people' to develop its future direction and ambitions through the preparation of our next Strategic Development Plan. This will identify the path for coming years and how resources are allocated to address our strategic objectives. I encourage all members and clubs to become involved in the consultation process. Your opinions are vital to ensure the Plan fully reflects the broad church we represent.

Mountaineering Ireland has strong relationships with many organisations: all the organisations that constitute Comhairle na Tuaithe; the international mountaineering (UIAA), rambling (ERA) and sport climbing (IFSC) organisations; like-minded youth organisations and many others. These relationships provide Mountaineering Ireland with a network that both enhances what we do and, equally, helps to promote our objectives to the widest audience. 2012 saw a major milestone achieved as our training sub-committee, an Bord Oiliúint Sléibhe, became a full member of Mountain Training which covers all the training Boards for the islands of Britain and Ireland. This change will also lead to greater cohesion for mountain training on the island of Ireland for years to come. I would like to thank our representatives on all of these organisations for their continued commitment and for maintaining their knowledge of our policies and goals thus ensuring effective representation.

Finally, I wish all Mountaineering Ireland members an adventurous and enjoyable 2013.



Ross Millar
Chairperson



“ 2013 will see Mountaineering Ireland ‘go to the people’ to develop its future direction and ambitions through the preparation of our next Strategic Development Plan. This will identify the path for coming years and how resources are allocated to address our strategic objectives ”



Mountaineering Ireland's work on access and conservation is focused on two core objectives:

- To secure continued access to mountain areas and crags
- To promote the conservation and responsible use of the mountain environment

During 2012 many Mountaineering Ireland members contributed to our work towards these objectives, as members of our Access & Conservation Committee, as Club Environmental Officers, as Mountaineering Ireland representatives on other organisations, and through personal action to protect access and the mountain environment. This collective effort is vital if Mountaineering Ireland is to deliver on its objectives.

The access and conservation efforts of Mountaineering Ireland volunteers are supported by our staff, including a full-time Hillwalking, Access & Conservation Officer, Helen Lawless.



ACCESS AND CONSERVATION

SECURING ACCESS

MOUNTAINEERING IRELAND'S AIM

As the national representative body for hillwalkers and climbers, Mountaineering Ireland's policy is that we are seeking reasonable access for responsible users. Our aim is to have open, unrestricted access on foot to unenclosed hills, mountains and coastal areas throughout Ireland. Where there isn't direct access to these areas from the public road, access should be achieved via routes leading from the public roads and car parks, through or around the enclosed fields out onto the open hillside.


Mountaineering Ireland pursues its access aim, primarily through building relationships with other upland stakeholders, including our involvement in Comhairle na Tuaithe (the Countryside Council) and working with Sport NI and Outdoor Recreation NI in Northern Ireland. We urge Mountaineering Ireland members to contact us for advice when concerns arise regarding access. As well as helping members enjoy their activities, this flow of information ensures that Mountaineering Ireland's work at national level to secure access is based on a comprehensive and up-to-date understanding of the situation on the ground.

THE FUTURE OF COILLTE?

The decision by Government to sell State assets, possibly including Coillte, was a major concern throughout 2012. Coillte owns almost 7% of the land area of the Republic of Ireland, with much of this in upland areas. Our initial reservations about a possible sale were met with assurances that the land would not be sold, just the harvesting rights, and that recreation sites would be protected.

Mountaineering Ireland made a case to Ministers and to NewERA, the body established to advise Government on the sale, that every part of the Coillte estate is used for recreation, not just their 150 designated recreation sites, and that access to higher ground through Coillte land is vital for hillwalkers. It is not just the ownership of the land that matters, but how it is managed. The sale of harvesting rights in our State forests for the next 80 years would see this land managed for commercial priorities and with that the erosion of public access, degradation of forest infrastructure and the decline of Ireland's forestry industry.

Mountaineering Ireland worked with the Dublin Mountains Initiative to agree a public statement from recreational and environmental



groups opposed to the sale and also joined with IMPACT in the Save Our Forests campaign. This campaign to raise public awareness and influence public representatives will continue until public enjoyment of our State forestry is secured for the long-term.

COMHAIRLE NA TUAITHE

Early in 2012, Comhairle na Tuaithe agreed an Action Plan for 2012-2013. Despite significant resource constraints progress has been made in many areas. A new process of co-operation between state landowners has enabled those not currently focused on recreation management to draw on the experience of bodies such as Coillte and the National Parks & Wildlife Service.

MOUNTAIN ACCESS PROJECT

The focus of the Mountain Access Project remained on the two initial pilot areas, particularly Carrauntoohil, and on finalising a State indemnity for landowners in the access areas. Ongoing negotiations with the landowners on Carrauntoohil, and wider consultation about the management of recreation on the MacGillycuddy Reeks, will inform how mountain access can be secured and managed here and in other areas.

ACCESS & LIABILITY INFORMATION

Work continued on the agreement of a public information leaflet on the subject of access and occupiers' liability in the Republic of Ireland. Revised text is with the Attorney General's Office for sign-off and the leaflet should be published by Comhairle na Tuaithe in the first half of 2013.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Mountaineering Ireland contributed to consultation on the preparation of a 10-year Action Plan for the further development of Outdoor Recreation in Northern Ireland. Mountaineering Ireland's submission emphasised the policy, legislative and structural changes required over the next decade.

Mountaineering Ireland also made a submission to Northern Ireland Water, which owns much of the High Mournes, on the development of their recreation and access policy. Contact with Countryside Officers is maintained through participation in the Outdoor Recreation Group facilitated by Outdoor Recreation NI.

PROMOTING CONSERVATION

MOUNTAINEERING IRELAND'S AIM

Mountaineering Ireland's work on conservation focuses on protecting the quality and character of the mountain and coastal environment. The management of erosion on upland paths dominated Mountaineering Ireland's conservation work in 2012 with consultations taking place in a number of areas as well as the hosting of the Helping the Hills conference.

HELPING THE HILLS

The continued growth in the popularity of hillwalking and other outdoor recreation activities is having an impact on Ireland's upland environment. Once-faint paths have evolved into worn and muddy lines, with the worst damage on blanket peat and steep ground. Concern that we respond appropriately to this erosion prompted Mountaineering Ireland to organise Helping the Hills, Ireland's first upland path conference which took place in Co. Wicklow during September 2012.

Over two days, through presentations, workshops and site visits, 120 participants gained an understanding of erosion processes, learned about path repairs that have been carried out and considered what actions are needed to look after our upland environment. To help ensure a consistent, sympathetic and quality approach, draft principles to guide the management of upland path erosion were presented in the closing session of the conference. Following further consultation and revisions, these principles will be put to the Mountaineering Ireland membership for approval in March 2013.

Mountaineering Ireland is currently

considering other actions proposed during the conference, including the formation of an upland path network in Ireland, a site visit to see upland path projects in England and the further development of helpingthehills.ie as a resource on upland path management and related matters. Mountaineering Ireland members have a role too, firstly in taking responsibility to minimise our impact, but also in reporting damage to paths, assisting with the cost of path repair and carrying out voluntary maintenance work.

PATH CONSULTATIONS

During 2012 Mountaineering Ireland contributed to consultation regarding upland paths in a number of areas including:

Slieve League – Mountaineering Ireland representatives walked the cliff path with Donegal County Council, trail advisers, representatives from the North West Mountaineering Club and the Sliabh Liag Walkers, and provided both verbal and written recommendations regarding erosion management.

Slieve Gullion – Following attendance at a consultation evening, Mountaineering Ireland made a written submission on work proposed for the summit path. After work had started on the path, our representatives met the project manager on site to provide feedback.

Croagh Patrick – Mountaineering Ireland facilitated an assessment of erosion on the pilgrim route by Elfyn Jones from this British Mountaineering Council. This was arranged in conjunction with Murrisk Development Association and Fáilte Ireland.

Mournes – During spring 2012, Mountaineering Ireland staff and volunteers participated in consultation as part of a strategic path review carried out in the Mournes. In June, we met with the Mourne Heritage Trust to look at path work done alongside the Glen River and in October the Mourne Heritage Trust hosted a site visit on Slieve Binnian to discuss upland path management with representatives from Mountaineering Ireland, MountainViews and the Ulster Federation of Rambling Clubs.



NATIONAL UPLANDS WORKING GROUP

As nearly all hill land is privately owned, either by individuals or jointly owned as commonage land, the most practical and cost-effective way to look after these areas into the future is likely to be in co-operation with the people who own and work the land. In October, Mountaineering Ireland hosted a one-day workshop to explore opportunities to support the sustainable management of upland areas under the next Rural Development Programme (2014-2020). At the end of the workshop a National Uplands Working Group was formed to develop proposals which will probably centre on a targeted agri-environment programme for the uplands. Such a scheme would support continuity in low-intensity hillfarming to deliver farm produce, but also reward farmers for the delivery of public goods such as landscape, biodiversity and recreation opportunities. Mountaineering Ireland will continue to support and contribute to this Working Group throughout 2013.

PROMOTING RESPONSIBLE USE

Responsible enjoyment of the hills and countryside is an important value within Mountaineering Ireland and our sport and runs throughout much of our work.

EVENTS POLICY AND GUIDELINES

In March 2012, after a comprehensive consultation process, Mountaineering Ireland adopted a new Policy and Guidelines for Organised Events

in Ireland's Mountain Areas. The document provides practical advice for all those involved in organising events such as walking festivals, challenge walks, adventure races and fundraising hikes. The policy also highlights the responsibility that participants have to choose events that are well-planned and have minimal adverse impact on the environment. Drawing on this work, Mountaineering Ireland contributed to the development of a new website to support the planning of sustainable outdoor events in Northern Ireland. Promotion of Mountaineering Ireland's new Events Policy will continue in 2013.

CLUB ENVIRONMENTAL OFFICERS

Mountaineering Ireland encourages all affiliated clubs to appoint a Club Environmental Officer to help raise environmental awareness within the club and provide a point of contact for Mountaineering Ireland. In turn, we provide regular updates and advice to Environmental Officers. During 2012 the number of clubs with Environmental Officers increased from 85 to 105. A total of 38 people attended four training days for Environmental Officers, where we combined input from Mountaineering Ireland with guest speakers on different aspects of the upland environment. It is clear that the Club Environmental Officer network is building to become a strong cohort of members working to protect the upland environment. Mountaineering Ireland extends thanks to all Club Environmental Officers for your efforts during 2012.

LEAVE NO TRACE

Mountaineering Ireland continues to support the Leave No Trace programme, by promoting the Leave No Trace message, making a financial contribution and through the input made by our volunteers. Mountaineering Ireland representatives played a large part in the development of the Leave No Trace Primary Schools resource (www.leavenotraceschools.org) which was launched by Minister Phil Hogan in April 2012. The launch coincided with a networking event on the theme of achieving behaviour change. Later in 2012, efforts focused on recruiting a new Programme Manager for Leave No Trace Ireland. This appointment should help strengthen the Leave No Trace network and provide greater support for those delivering the Leave No Trace message.

WIDER AWARENESS

Mountaineering Ireland sought to raise public awareness of the importance, and vulnerability, of Ireland's mountain environment through an appearance on the Mooney Goes Wild show on RTE Radio 1 and through articles published in Irish Wildlife magazine and Walking World Ireland. These articles can be downloaded from the Access & Conservation section of www.mountaineering.ie.

REPRESENTATION ON OTHER ORGANISATIONS

Mountaineering Ireland's work towards its access and conservation objectives is supported by voluntary representatives on a number of other organisations. Brief feedback from some of these is provided below:

IRISH UPLANDS FORUM (IUF)

The Irish Uplands Forum (IUF) promotes a partnership approach to the sustainable management of upland areas. After unsuccessful efforts to secure support for an EU LIFE project on vegetation management in the Wicklow Mountains, Comeraghs and Cooleys, efforts later in 2012 focused on producing recommendations for the Wicklow area. Peter Norton and Ruairi O Conchúir represent us on the Board.

WICKLOW UPLANDS COUNCIL (WUC)

Pearse Connolly reports that the problem of dogs worrying sheep was a major discussion topic for WUC during 2012. Recommendations from a sub-committee formed to examine the issue include signage and better public awareness to ensure that owners keep their dogs under control at all times. In December, Gaye Maguire replaced

Pearse as our representative on WUC. Mountaineering Ireland extends sincere thanks to Pearse for his huge commitment over the past six years.

DUBLIN MOUNTAINS INITIATIVE (DMI)

The DMI represents recreational users of the Dublin Mountains and has two seats on the Dublin Mountains Partnership (DMP) which is responsible for the Dublin Mountains Way and operates a Volunteer Ranger service. In 2012, the DMI was instrumental in bringing together recreation and environmental groups to make a joint statement about how the sale of Coillte's crop could threaten recreation. Milo Kane represents Mountaineering Ireland on the DMI; a second seat is currently vacant.

WICKLOW MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK (WMNP) COUNCIL

Resource constraints continue to curtail activity, particularly with regard to path repair. According to Mountaineering Ireland's representative, Mairead Kennedy, topics discussed by the Council in 2012 included sheep worrying by uncontrolled dogs, the burning of upland vegetation and new proposals for the management of commonages.

COILLTE SOCIAL & ENVIRONMENTAL PANELS

Pat Dignam represents Mountaineering Ireland on Coillte's Social & Environmental Panel for the Eastern District, while Sinead Gaughan is our representative for the Connemara/Mayo District. The level of activity in both panels was reduced in 2012, partly due to internal re-structuring within Coillte. Formerly 13 Districts, Coillte's forest is now divided into eight Business Administration Units (BAUs). Mountaineering Ireland is seeking representation in each area to ensure that the needs of our members are factored into future plans.





YOUTH

2012 again was a strong year for youth development in Ireland with a continued focus on supporting the development of leadership skills within our clubs and other youth focused organisations. Mountaineering Ireland co-ordinated a wide programme during 2012, including a Scottish Youth Meet, Aspirant Mountaineers' workshops, Youth Trad Climbing camps and continued support for Scouting Ireland and the Irish Girl Guides.

YOUTH ORGANISATIONS – HILLWALKING PROGRAMMES

Scouting Ireland's hillwalking programme continues to go from strength to strength. Throughout 2012 Mountaineering Ireland has supported a number of leadership events, which culminated in Scouting Ireland's

'Moot' in Tollymore Outdoor Centre in November. Mountaineering Ireland also helped the Irish Girl Guides shape their fledgling programme, and sessions focused on basic leadership skills, navigation and Leave no Trace all instilled an enthusiasm for more.

SUPPORTING STUDENTS

Students from all over Ireland attended an Aspirant Mountaineers weekend in the Mourne Mountains. Aimed at giving college club leaders the skills and techniques needed to stay safe in the mountains of Ireland, the weekend was well attended. Participants in the Aspirant Mountaineers' workshop were then given the chance to further their development in a Scottish Youth Winter Meet, run in tandem with the Mountaineering Ireland Winter Meet in Glencoe.



**“ As part of
Mountaineering Ireland’s
Women in Sport funding,
Mountaineering Ireland
invested in a committed
group of volunteers keen
to introduce the youth
of the Ballyhoura area to
mountaineering ”**

YOUTH CAMPS

A number of successful climbing camps for young club members were coordinated by Mountaineering Ireland in 2012. A sport climbing trip to Mallorca and a bouldering trip to Fontainebleau, France were extremely successful providing a variety of opportunities to climb in different styles. A Youth camp to Donegal provided some proper adventure and the Cork Youth Climbing Club (CYCC) were supported in a summer trip to the Burren and their hugely exciting climbing exchange with a Belgian Climbing Club. The favour was then returned when the CYCC went to Belgium to climb at Freyr.

TRAD CLIMBING WORKSHOPS FOR YOUTHS

2012 saw the introduction of traditional climbing workshops for young people. These events were very well attended, with young people given the chance to learn the skills needed to climb in the Irish environment. This was complemented with a host of opportunities for youth clubs to go climbing and bouldering in Dalkey Quarry, the Mourne and Fair Head.

ONGOING CLUB SUPPORT

Mountaineering Ireland has continued to support the local clubs based at Gortatole Wall, Hot Rock Wall, Ganaway Activity Centre and the Northern Ireland Youth Climbing Team based at the Ozone. These clubs meet up on a weekly basis for training/coaching sessions with many club members participating in competitions such as the Youth Climbing Series, Irish Bouldering League and Irish National Competitions. Adventure climbing and mountaineering in the Irish hills is fundamental to many of these clubs with regular trips to the Mourne, Donegal, Kerry and Wicklow.

BALLYHOURA CLIMBING PROJECT

As part of Mountaineering Ireland's Women in Sport funding, Mountaineering Ireland invested in a committed group of volunteers keen to introduce the youth of the Ballyhoura area to mountaineering. Both volunteers and participants got the opportunity to develop new skills and all were encouraged to become involved in local clubs and continue their participation for life.

The outcome of the project is the foundation for a very healthy club based at Kilfinane Outdoor Education Centre.

Kilfinane Outdoor Education Centre was a huge asset to the project and continues to facilitate the club's development. The project was also supported by local clubs and by County Limerick Local Sports Partnership, South Tipperary Local Sports Partnership and County Cork Local Sports Partnership. Mountaineering Ireland would like to thank all the partner organisations for their assistance and support.





“As always the aim is for the young competitors to experience competition climbing in a fun, safe, setting and this will continue to improve and evolve into the foreseeable future”

TALENT DEVELOPMENT

2012 was another very productive year with continuous progression both in the world of competition climbing and outdoor performance. Youth climbing standards continue to strengthen and develop with a very strong contingent coming through the Youth Climbing Series (see below) and strong attendance at all other National Title competitions (with the Irish Bouldering Championships and Irish Lead Climbing Championships both taking place at new venues in Dublin).

National Coach, Eddie Cooper continued his excellent work with those competing or progressing towards international competition.

COACHING AWARDS

Following significant development work with the British Mountaineering Council, Mountain Training UK and the Mountaineering Council of Scotland, Mountaineering Ireland is progressing Climbing Coach Awards with the support of Coaching Ireland. A Long Term Climber Development model was mapped in 2012 and this supported the drafting of a Level 1 Climbing Coach syllabus. The aim of the awards

is to provide a structure for those interested in coaching climbers in technique, strategy and skills. Level 1 will become available during 2013.

NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIONS

YOUTH CLIMBING SERIES

The Youth Climbing Series continues to go from strength to strength across Ireland. The four qualifying rounds, Mardyke (Cork), UCD (Dublin), Hot Rock (Tollymore) and Gortatole OEC (Fermanagh), all saw an increase in attendance, with a significant 30% growth in participants at the finals which took place at the Ozone, Belfast. Eighteen climbers went on to represent Mountaineering Ireland at the Great Britain and Ireland finals in Ratho, Edinburgh.

Strong attendance is predicted for 2013, with additional support from volunteers and sponsors bringing continued development, both in numbers and in standards. As always the aim is for the young competitors to experience competition climbing

in a fun, safe, setting and this will continue to improve and evolve into the foreseeable future.

IRISH BOULDERING LEAGUE

Sponsored by climbing.ie, the 2012 Irish Bouldering League provided an opportunity for everyone to participate in a friendly and enjoyable climbing competition. The rounds were all supported by willing volunteers who took ownership of their local round.

IRISH BOULDERING & LEAD CHAMPIONSHIPS

The Irish Bouldering Championships moved to Gravity Climbing Centre, Dublin. The new Gravity Centre brought the championships to life with competitors from Great Britain and France joining the fray. The new venue inspired a rise in the standard of competition and first place was taken by Dominic Burns and Katie Maxwell (Senior); Dominic Burns and Rachel Carr (Junior A); and, Jack Ryan and Eleanor Lawrence (Junior B).

With Dublin seeing the arrival of Awesome Climbing Walls, the 2012 Lead Climbing Championships had a surge in competitors, and, again attracted competitors from overseas. Competition was strong with Alex Waterhouse and Rachel Carr winning both Senior and Junior A, and Lucy Mitchell tying with Rachel in the Senior category. Carson Carnduff and Eleanor Lawrence were crowned Junior B champions.

INTERNATIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS & RECOGNITION

2012 took Irish competition climbing in another realm. Dominic Burns with Mountaineering Ireland's Head Coach, Eddie Cooper to guide him, left a trail of victories behind him at home and abroad culminating in winning the European Youth Cup. Dominic's achievements saw him qualify for performance funding from Sport Northern Ireland, which funded his participation in the World Youth Championships in Singapore.





MOUNTAIN TRAINING AND SAFE PRACTICE

The provision of general mountaineering safety advice and the training of hillwalkers and climbers are central to the aims of Mountaineering Ireland and its training sub-committee, Bord Oiliúint Sléibhe (BOS), the Irish Mountain Training Board. 2012 was a busy year with many developments in the area of training. BOS continues to provide the necessary support and guidance to maintain and improve standards in all aspects of mountain training.

Following on from the AAA report (2009) and the Joint Training Board Report (2011), BOS is now a full voting member of Mountain Training UK (MTUK). Visits from MTUK officers concluded that relevant training and assessment courses are equivalent to their UK counterparts and it is hoped that by becoming a full member of MTUK, cross border training and assessment will become much easier for all candidates.

Mountain Training Northern Ireland (MTNI), of which Mountaineering Ireland is a member, supported BOS developments and vice versa. BOS and MTNI jointly developed the Multi-Pitch Award syllabus and Tollymore Outdoor Centre instructors participated in the BOS Train the Trainers course in 2012.

Mountaineering Ireland has been working closely with Coaching Ireland to match the competencies of BOS training schemes to a generic sport framework. This will ensure that the quality of our leader/instructor courses is equivalent to those of other NGBs and meets the requirements of Coaching Ireland. Most of our senior course providers attended a three-day Coaching Ireland Tutor Training assimilation course and all are on course to be approved as Adventure Sports Tutor Trainers and one as a Tutor Trainer Assessor. Coaching Ireland representatives also attended a number of our training courses and provided valuable feedback to assist ongoing training scheme improvements.

With help from Ronan Lenihan, Andy Callan and Coaching Ireland, Mountain Skills and Single Pitch Award (SPA) training were mapped to the new FETAC framework at levels 4 and 5 respectively and SPA assessment at Level 6.

TRAINING FOR CLUBS

Supporting skills development for members is central to Mountaineering Ireland and 2012 saw several club workshops take place around the island, with 'tailor made' workshops or talks delivered for clubs and, also, leadership and skills workshops as part of our Spring and Autumn Gatherings.

The annual Club Training Officers' (CTO) workshop took place in November based at the Glen of Imaal Mountain Rescue Base in Laragh, Co. Wicklow. Mountaineering Ireland encourages each member club to nominate a Club Training Officer whose role it is to support skills provision with their club. This workshop is aimed at helping clubs to address their training needs and improving the skills needed to teach navigation within the Club environment. The 2012 workshop was attended by eight Club Training Officers.

In addition to the more formal CTO workshop, Training Officer Alun Richardson also ran several workshops around the country specifically for club members. These included an informal workshop on scrambling which served to increase participants' confidence

on steeper ground, and a workshop on the use of GPS with BOS Provider Kevin O'Callaghan that was attended by six members from various clubs. Mountaineering Ireland is keen to run a broader range of club workshops in 2013, so contact us if you have any requirements that we can help with.

OTHER WORKSHOPS

Alun Richardson and Mountaineering Ireland's Talent Development Officer, Neal McQuaid conducted a Movement Workshop at Awesome Walls Climbing Centre, Dublin in December. In the absence of coaching courses for climbers, this workshop was over-subscribed thus demonstrating the ongoing demand for such development opportunities.

BOS COURSE REVIEW

Mountaineering Ireland held a series of course review sessions around the country between November 12th and 19th. The review of the current BOS course syllabii was well received by providers, candidates and award holders alike with good attendances overall. Useful feedback and constructive criticism were gratefully accepted on both existing and proposed training schemes. A sincere thank you to all those who contributed either at the reviews or by email or phone. A summary report of the review sessions is available on mountaineering.ie.

LOOKING FORWARD

We also used the course reviews as an opportunity to introduce several new awards which are at various stages of development. The syllabus for the soon to be launched Trail Walk Leader Scheme (TWL) is in its final stages and culminated in an information day on December 4th for interested parties. The TWL is aimed at those wishing to lead groups on defined man-made trails such as forest and coastal paths. We anticipate that this will be a very popular course as it fills a gap in the current portfolio. Pilot schemes will take place in spring/summer 2013 with a view to rolling out the course across the country later in 2013.

BOS is in final stages of launching the Climbing Wall Award (CWA) which will be a supervisory award for those working in indoor climbing walls. Again, we anticipate high levels of demand for this award given the increased popularity of indoor climbing walls around the country. We are in the process of training existing SPA and MPA Providers to facilitate this award and expect courses to start as early as spring 2013.

AWARDS IN 2012

The BOS Mountain Skills scheme continues to be extremely popular amongst club members wishing to improve their navigational skills and as a crucial first step towards Mountain Leader Training. Registrations for the Mountain Leader scheme and the standard of those going forward for assessment continue to be positive. The two ML Assessments held in 2012 were well attended and candidates impressed the assessors with their preparation for the assessment as well as the general standard of their skills. Numbers registered for our next ML Assessment in April 2013 are also high.

Two Walking Group Leader Assessments were also held in 2012 but the numbers coming forward for assessment and, especially, the number of new registrants for this course, are dropping significantly. We anticipate that these levels may decrease further with the introduction of the Trail Walk Leader Scheme.

COURSE PROVIDERS

Mountaineering Ireland continues to support the training of new BOS Course Providers through our annual Train the Trainers course which is held in January of each year. Also of great importance to Mountaineering Ireland is the continued up-skilling and general support of our existing providers through CPD workshops. Mountaineering Ireland currently has 61 BOS providers working across outdoor centres, member clubs and in the commercial environment. Five new providers were inducted in 2012 and it looks certain that this will increase in 2013.

2012 has been a busy but immensely satisfying year for the Training Office.

Every opportunity to engage with providers, award holders and those going through training schemes is relished. Hillwalking and climbing has never been as popular in Ireland and happily this is mirrored in the numbers participating in the BOS and MTNI training schemes to further enhance their skills and enjoyment of Ireland's hills, mountains and crags.

Registrations for Training

Mountain Skills	404
Mountain Leader	109
Walking Group Leader	3
Single Pitch Award	148
Multi Pitch Award	9

Number of BOS Course Providers

Mountain Skills	61
Mountain Skills Assessment	20
Single Pitch Award	10
Multi Pitch Award	5
Mountain Leader Training	12
Walking Group Leader Training	6





COMMUNICATIONS AND SERVICES

IRISH MOUNTAIN LOG

The Irish Mountain Log had a subtle but effective ‘make-over’ in 2012 and feedback has been encouraging. It is heartening to see the growth in club-related news and features – this is what the Log is all about – reporting your travels, adventures, milestones and concerns for our mountain environment. The Log has never had such a reach, with more than 11,000 copies being consistently distributed to our members, through newsagents and to those we wish to influence.

The excellence of the Log is down to many, including those no longer involved in its production who set the tone and standard for the publication. The editorial team, ably led by Patrick O’Sullivan despite his busy day job as a Public Health Doctor, continues to hit these high standards and Mountaineering Ireland sincerely thanks the team and equally congratulates all those who had articles published during 2012.

MEMBERS GATHERINGS AND MEETS

Mountaineering Ireland’s spring, autumn, winter and summer gatherings and meets are an important opportunity for our community to gather together and share experiences, knowledge and, most importantly, their passion

for the mountains. Personal skills development is an integral part of the winter and summer meets in particular, offering a chance for individuals to progress their personal mountaineering confidence.

SPRING AND AUTUMN GATHERINGS

In March, the Spring Gathering ventured back to the Tipperary area for the second year in a row, this time finding a base in Clonmel with the Peaks Mountaineering Club who were enthusiastic and selfless hosts. Activities in the Comeragh Mountains and a range of workshops provided a full programme.

The Annual General Meeting was held as part of the Spring Gathering. As highlighted earlier, the members approved Mountaineering Ireland’s new Events Policy. The members’ forum centred on conservation, with concerns being raised about the condition of mountain paths, especially Camarahill in Wicklow, and a heated debate on the proliferation of memorials on the mountains. A mandate was given to Mountaineering Ireland to seek support for erosion control on the Devil’s Ladder. The membership unanimously backed Mountaineering Ireland’s campaign against any sale of Coillte and encouraged the formation of an alliance to thwart these proposals.

**“ Mountaineering
Ireland’s spring, autumn,
winter and summer
gatherings and meets
are an important
opportunity for our
community to gather
together and share
experiences, knowledge
and, most importantly,
their passion for the
mountains ”**

The Autumn Gathering brought the membership to the Cooley Peninsula and Mourne Mountains where the Crows Hillwalking Club hosted a terrific Gathering based in Ravensdale, Co. Louth. The Crows set the scene with an inspiring step back into the mythology of the region followed by a weekend of activities and good humour!

The members' forum focused largely on the actions arising out of the Helping the Hills conference and path work in the Mournes and at Slieve League. Coillte and its retention in state ownership was again reinforced by the members as a campaign for Mountaineering Ireland to focus on.

WOMEN WITH ALTITUDE

The second and now annual Women With Altitude event was held in Gartan Outdoor Education Centre in April 2012. The event encourages women hillwalkers and climbers to share ideas, learn new skills, enjoy themselves and benefit from mutual support. Women With Altitude will be an ongoing focus as part of Mountaineering Ireland's Women in Sport initiative.

Encouraging and inspiring women to fulfill their potential in hillwalking and climbing is central to the objectives of the Women with Altitude initiative. It is hoped this will raise the profile of women in mountaineering and see more women become involved as volunteers within Mountaineering Ireland. 2013 sees Women with Altitude move to Glendalough, Wicklow: www.womenwithaltitude.ie.

SUMMER AND WINTER MEETS

A hugely well attended Winter Meet was followed by Mountaineering Ireland's first Summer Alpine Meet in Italy in 2012.

Glencoe, Scotland was the location for the Winter Meet. A choice of 3-day courses was offered, giving walkers and climbers an opportunity to learn a wide range of winter skills including avalanche awareness, winter navigation, and climbing skills. Thanks to Clive Roberts who directed the programme.

The Summer Alpine Meet was held in Val Masino, Italy. Val Masino provided an excellent base for Alpine training courses for beginners to experienced participants, with great hiking and via ferrata options also accessible. More than 70 participants enjoyed a range of workshops, courses, individual challenges and a range of walks and ascents. The five-day Alpine courses offered participants a chance for adventure at altitude. The feedback from members at the Summer Meet was so positive the meet will return to Italy in 2013 – this time going to Adamello.





INSURANCE

The Mountaineering Ireland office regularly gets questions about insurance, which clearly highlights the importance of this to all our members. During 2012 Mountaineering Ireland reviewed its existing membership insurance policies. While it was clear that the existing policy provided the appropriate level of cover, there was rationale in testing the market. Following a process involving five experienced and reputable brokers, all with an understanding of risk management in adventure sports, Mountaineering Ireland moved to a new broker, O'Driscoll O'Neill, with Lloyds as underwriters. The cover provided is identical to that of the previous policy, however, a saving of almost 30% was achieved and passed on to the membership.

ONLINE MEMBERSHIP MANAGEMENT

In 2012 Mountaineering Ireland developed an online membership management tool, which will make club administration much easier for Club Secretaries and Treasurers. This will also improve the efficiency of membership administration from Mountaineering Ireland's perspective. During 2013 clubs will be invited to add their 'additional members' online. At the next Club Renewal in November 2013 a discount will be available to clubs that renew online. The system requires additional personal data, but this in turn will ensure that data is maintained within the most appropriate and secure frameworks.

THANK YOU

Mountaineering Ireland wishes to thank all members and all affiliated clubs for their continued support. The work of volunteers throughout Mountaineering Ireland's clubs is a true barometer of the passion members have for hillwalking and climbing and the mountain environment. The input provided by members multiplies the impact of Mountaineering Ireland staff.

Mountaineering Ireland would also like to acknowledge all those who contributed to the Helping the Hills conference, particularly our sponsors: Northern Ireland Environment Agency; Department of the Environment, Community & Local Government (Rural Recreation Section); Fáilte Ireland and the Heritage Council.

EXTERNAL REPRESENTATION

Mountaineering Ireland is represented on the following organisations:

An Oige
Coillte Social and Environmental Panels (Eastern and Connemara/Mayo Districts)
Comhairle Na Tuaithe
County Cork Local Sports Partnership
Dublin Mountains Initiative
Irish Adventure Sports Training Trust
Irish Uplands Forum
Leave No Trace Ireland
Mountaineering Coordination Group (UK and Ireland)
Mountain Heritage Trust
Mountain Training NI
Mountain Training UK
Mountain Rescue Ireland
National Coordinating Committee for Cave & Mountain Rescue
Northern Ireland Environment Link,
Wicklow Mountains National Park Council
Wicklow Uplands Council

AFFILIATIONS

Mountaineering Ireland is affiliated to the following organisations:

European Ramblers Association
Federation of Irish Sports
International Federation of Sports Climbing
Leave No Trace Ireland
Northern Ireland Environmental Link
Northern Ireland Sports Forum
Union Internationale des Association d'Alpinisme (UIAA)
Wicklow Uplands Council

WORKING RELATIONSHIPS

In addition to the above, during 2012 we also worked closely with the following organisations:

Access and Conservation Trust (ACT)
Birdwatch Ireland
British Mountaineering Council
Coaching Ireland
Coillte
County Cork Local Sports Partnership
County Limerick Local Sports Partnership
Dublin Mountains Partnership
European Forum on Nature Conservation and Pastoralism
Fáilte Ireland
FSC Ireland
Ganaway Activity Centre
Gartan Outdoor Education Centre
Gortatole Outdoor Education Centre
Heritage Council
IMPACT Trade Union
Irish Cattle & Sheep Farmers Association
Irish Creamery Milk Suppliers Association
Irish Farmers Association
Irish Girl Guides
Irish Sports Council
Irish Wildlife Trust
Kilfinane Outdoor Education Centre
Mardyke Area Cork
Mountaineering Council of Scotland
Mountain Meitheal
Mountain Rescue Ireland
Mountain Training Northern Ireland
Mountain Training United Kingdom
Mourne Heritage Trust
National Parks & Wildlife Service
National Trails Office
Northern Ireland Environment Agency
Outdoor Recreation Northern Ireland
Ozone Complex, Belfast
Rural Recreation Section, Department of Environment, Community & Local Government
Scouting Ireland
South Tipperary Local Sports Partnership
Sport Northern Ireland
Teagasc
Tollymore Outdoor Centre
Ulster Federation of Rambling Clubs
Wicklow Mountains National Park

LIST OF CLUBS AFFILIATED TO MOUNTAINEERING IRELAND

(As of December 2012)

4A's Walking Club
Acara Trekking Club
Annascaul Walks
Aonach ar Siúl
Arklow and Wicklow Hillwalking Club
Athlone Walking Club
Ballyduff Walking Club
Ballyhoura Bears Mountaineering Club
Ballyvaughan Fanore Walking Club
Bandon Walking Club
Bank of Ireland Hill Walking Club
Beanna Beola Hillwalking Club
Belfast Association of Rockclimbers and Fellrunners
Belturbet Walks & Heritage Group
Bishopstown Orienteering and Hillwalking Club
Blackrock Hillwalking Club
Blackstairs Ramblers
Blarney Walking Group
Blayne Ramblers
Bogtrotters Hill Walking Club
Bootleggers Hillwalking Club
Boyle Curlew Hillwalking Club
Cahirsiveen Outdoor Club
Carran Walking Club
CIÉ Hillwalkers
CIT Mountaineering Club
Clare Outdoor Club
Clonakilty Walking Club
Clondalkin Hillwalking Club
Clooney Quin Hillwalking Club
Club Cualann
Club Siúlóide Chonamara Theas
Cobh Hillwalking Club
Coconuts Hill Walking Club
Colmcille Climbers
Comeragh Mountaineering Club
Coolaney Walkers
Cork Co-op Climbing Club
Cork Backpackers Club
Cork Mountaineering Club
Cork Youth Climbing Club
Crannagh Ramblers
Croom Abu
Crosshaven Walking Club
Crows Hillwalkers
Cumann Siúl Cois Coiribe
Cumann Sléibhteoireachta an Leith Triuigh
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
Enniscrone Walking Club
ESB Hillwalking Club
Evolution Climbing Club
Ferrard Ramblers Club
Fineos Hillwalking Club
Fitzamblers
Foyle Hillwalking and Rambling Club
Foxford Ramblers
Galtee Walking Club
Galway Walking Club
Garda Mountaineering & Canoeing Club
Glanbia Hillwalking Club
Glenwalk
GMIT Mountaineering Club
Grey Lake Ramblers
GWATS Walking Club
Hanging Rockers
Hillwalkers Club
Imaal Walkers
Institution Mountaineering Club
Irish Christian Hillwalking Club
Irish Geological Association
Irish Mountaineering Club
Irish Quaternary Association
Irish Ramblers Club
Kenmare Walking Club
Killarney Mountaineering Club
Kilmacthomas Walkers
Knockadosan Hillwalking Club
Laune Mountaineering Club
Lee Hillwalking & Mountaineering Club
Letterkenny IT Hillwalking Society
Limerick Climbing Club
Lung Gompas
Mallow Walking Club
Mayo Eagles Ramblers Club
Marley Hillwalkers
Maumturks Walking Club
Maynooth Hillwalking Club
Mevagh Ramblers
Mid Tipp Mountaineering Club
Midleton Hillwalking Club
Midleton Climbing Club
Mountain Meitheal
Muintir Na Sléibhte
Na Cnocadóirí
Na Coisithe
Navan Trekkers
Nire Valley Bogtrotters
North West Mayo Hillwalkers
North West Youth Climbing Club
Northern Ireland Youth Climbing Team
NUI Galway Mountaineering Club
North West Mountaineering Club
Out & About
Out & About NI
Over the Edge Hillwalking Club
Ox Mountain Ramblers
Oyster Walking Club
Peaks Mountaineering Club
Poolbeg Ramblers
Queens University Mountaineering Club
Rainbow Hill Walking Club
Rathgormack Climbing Club
Rathgormack Ramblers
Roscrea Ramblers
Rosway Walkers
Savage Craic Climbing Club
Shanganagh Ramblers
Shelmalier Walking Club
Siúl Walking Club
Siúltóirí Buadain
Skibbereen Walking Group
Slane Striders
Sliabh Luachra Hillwalking Club
Sieve Aughty Walking Club
Sligo Mountaineering Club
Sligo Walking Club
Spartan Red Sox Walking Club
Sperrins Hillwalking Club
St. Kevin's College, Dublin
Stryker Hiking Club
Swilly Hiking Club
Strabane Hillwalking & Rambling Club
The Arch Co-op
The Bushcraft Club
The Goya Gang
The Team Project
The Wayfarers
Tinahely Walking Club
Tralee Mountaineering Club
Tredagh Trekkers
Trekkers Mountaineering Club
Trinity College Hiking Club
Tullow Mountaineering Club
Tyndall Mountain Club
UCC Mountaineering Club
UCD Mountaineering Club
University of Ulster Jordanstown Mountaineering Club
Waterford IT Mountaineering Club
West Clare Walking Club
Westport Hillwalking and Mountaineering Club
West Wicklow Walkers
Wexford Hillwalking Club
Winders Climbing Club
Woolgreen Walking Club

E&OE

CERTIFIED
CARBON
NEUTRAL

publication

John Marks

CarbonNeutral.com



FSC
www.fsc.org

MIX

Paper from
responsible sources
FSC® C015417

This is a CarbonNeutral® publication, printed by a CarbonNeutral® certified company, where carbon dioxide emissions are measured and reduced at source. Unavoidable emissions are offset by supporting a variety of renewable energy and clean technology projects which save equivalent amounts of (CO₂e).

This publication is printed on Revive 100 Offset, an FSC certified material, which promotes sustainable and responsible forest management. FSC certification supports responsible forest management worldwide.



Mountaineering Ireland | Sléibhteoireacht Éireann

Sport HQ, 13 Joyce Way, Park West Business Park, Dublin 12, Ireland
Telephone 00 353 (0)1 6251115 email: info@mountaineering.ie website: www.mountaineering.ie

Tollymore Outdoor Centre, Bryansford, Newcastle, County Down, BT33 0PT, Northern Ireland
Telephone (+44) (0) 28 4372 5354

