



# THE HILLWALKER

January 2020-April 2020



## In This Issue:

**Liz McWilliam's tells us what The Hillwalkers got up to in Mayo.**

**New Committee Announced.**

**Social Calendar 2020!!!**

**Winter rucksack essentials**

**Hiking Schedule Feb/Mar**

**Read Warren Lawless' account of how to build a snow cave & how not to get stuck in one!**

## COMMITTEE POSITIONS 2020/2021

### *Committee 2020/21*

Chairman	Ruaidhrí O' Connor
Treasurer	Ita O'Hanlon
Secretary	Caitríona Burke
Sunday Hikes Coordinator	Frank Carrick
Environmental Officer	Michael Quinn
Membership Secretary	Gerry Walsh
Weekend Away Coordinator	Søren Stuhr Mandrup
Club Social Coordinator	Udo Sap
Assistant	Gavin Gilvarry
Social Media Coordinator	Laura Grealish
Newsletter Editor	Aisling O' Keefe

### *Special thanks to:*

*Webmaster*

*Matt Geraghty*



## HIKE PROGRAMME

### January 2020 – March 2020

---

**MEET:** Corner of Burgh Quay and Hawkins St

**DEPART:** Sundays at 10.00 am (*unless stated otherwise*), or earlier if it is full.

**TRANSPORT:** Private bus (*unless stated otherwise*)

**COST:** €15.00 (*unless stated otherwise*)

---

**2nd pick-up point:** *On the outward journey, the bus will stop briefly to collect walkers at the pick-up point. Should the bus be full on departure from Burgh Quay, this facility cannot be offered.*

**Return drop-off point:** *On the return journey, where indicated, the bus will stop near the outward pick-up point to drop off any hikers. We regret this is not possible on all hikes.*

*If you wish to avail of the 2<sup>nd</sup> pick-up point, it is advisable to contact the hike leader or someone else who will definitely be on the hike, to let them know.*

---

## GENERAL HIKE NOTES

**PARTICIPATION** Mountaineering is an activity with a danger of personal injury or death. Participants should be aware of and accept these risks. People who take part in our club activities do so at their own risk and are responsible for their own actions and involvement.

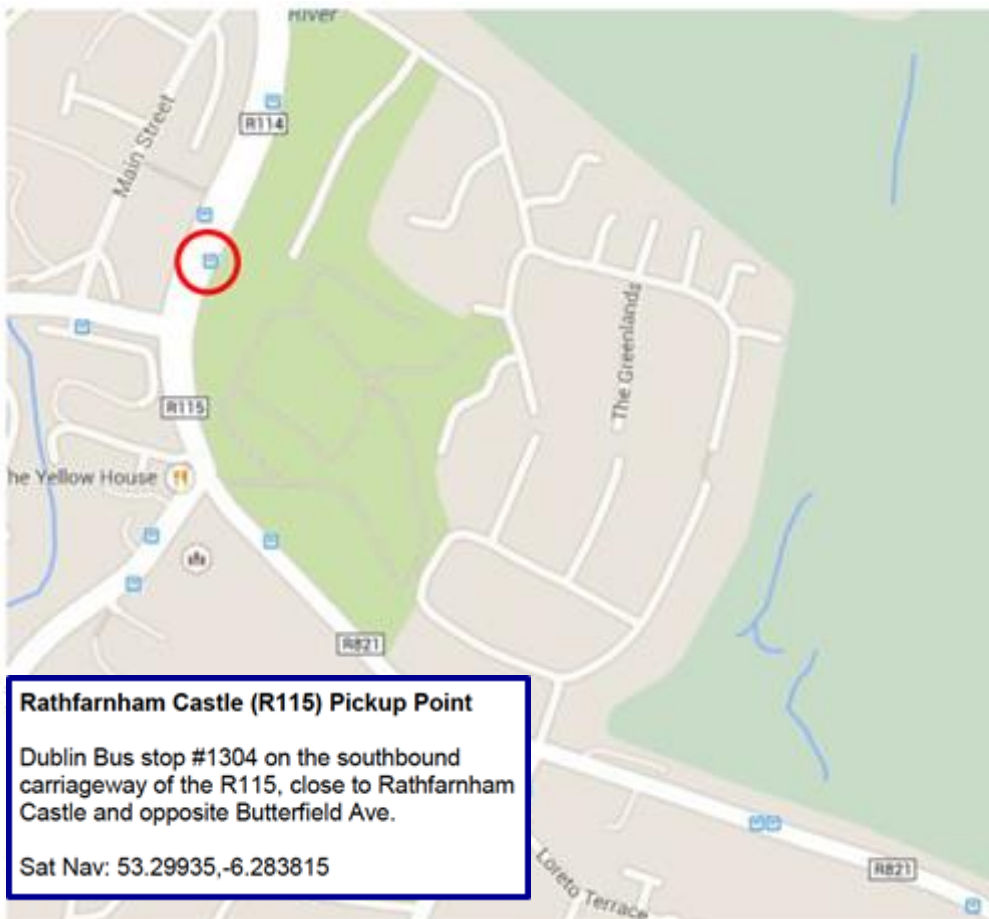
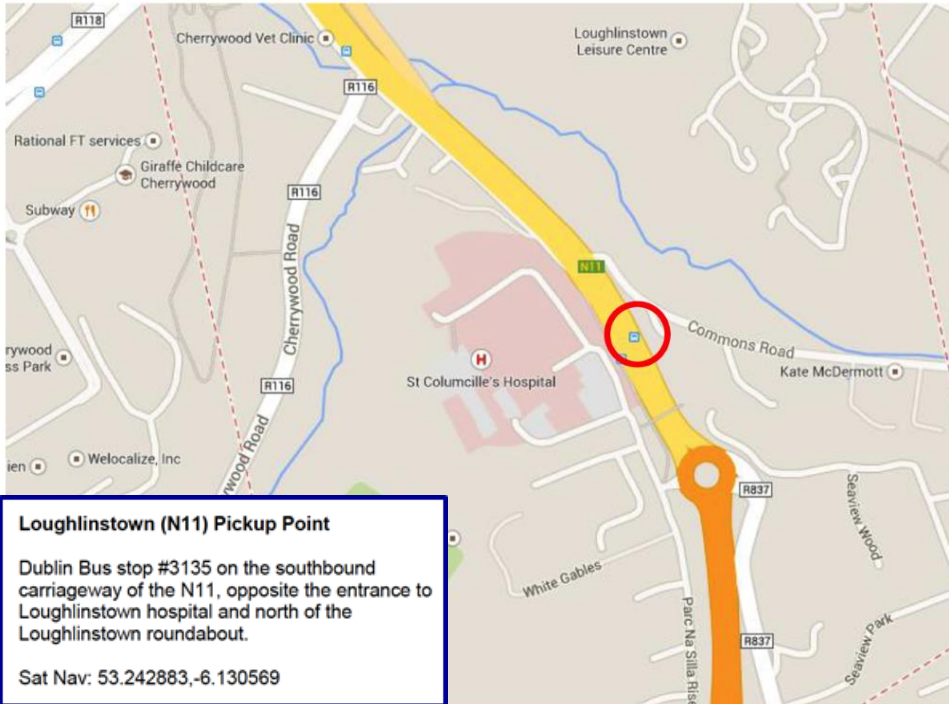
**CO-ORDINATION** If necessary, tickets are given out on Sundays to ensure that participants reserve a bus place as they arrive.

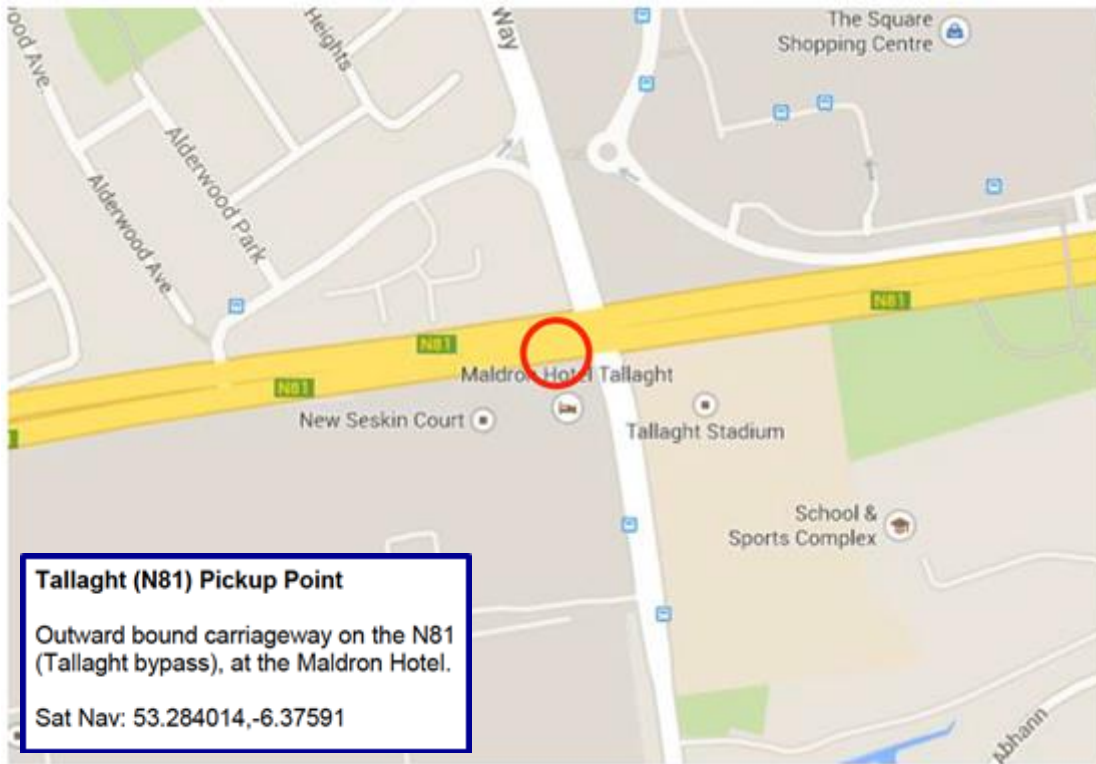
**LEADER** The leader has the right to refuse anyone who is not adequately equipped (e.g., without appropriate boots, rainwear, food, torch, hat, gloves, etc.). The leader may alter the route from that described in the program. The leader sets the pace of the hike and walkers are expected to obey the leader's instructions at all times.

**EQUIPMENT** It is essential to bring good rain gear (both jacket and over-trousers) and to leave cotton t-shirts and jeans at home! Boots must be sturdy with proper ankle support and a rigid non-slip sole such as Vibram.

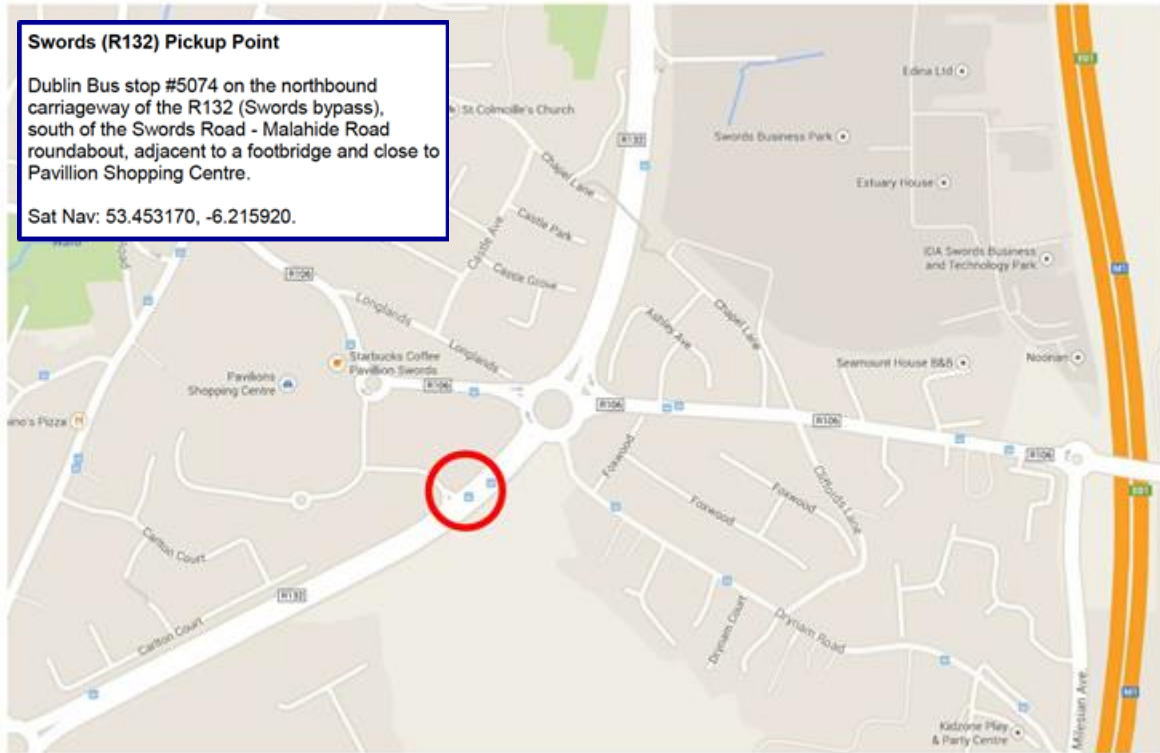
**WALKING STICKS AND RUCKSACKS** Remember that walking sticks and rucksacks cannot be brought onto the bus and must be stowed away in the boot for the duration of the journey.

# Pick Up Points





**Tallaght (N81) Pickup Point**  
Outward bound carriageway on the N81 (Tallaght bypass), at the Maldron Hotel.  
Sat Nav: 53.284014,-6.37591



**Swords (R132) Pickup Point**  
Dublin Bus stop #5074 on the northbound carriageway of the R132 (Swords bypass), south of the Swords Road - Malahide Road roundabout, adjacent to a footbridge and close to Pavillion Shopping Centre.  
Sat Nav: 53.453170, -6.215920.

## Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> January

**Please bring a head torch on all late autumn/winter hikes.**

Leader: **Brian Madden**

**\*\*\*\* Public Transport Hike\*\*\*\***

Meet at bus stop for 133 bus at Townsend St. at **9.45am** for **10.00am** service.  
(Cost is €8.30 Adult Return or use Leap card or travel pass)

Alternatively, meet at Kilmacanogue footbridge at 10.50am.

**Route:** Great Sugar Loaf by Rocky Valley route \* Circular track to Glenview \* Woodland track \* Glen of Downs West \* Down.

**Distance:** 13 km  
**Ascent:** 600m

**Maps:** OSI 56 and East-West Mapping(Wicklow Mountains West)

## Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> February

**Please bring a head torch on all late autumn/winter hikes.**

Leader: **Laura Grealish**

**2<sup>nd</sup> pick-up & return drop-off point:**  
Loughlinstown roundabout

**Route:** Glendalough \* Brockagh \* Tonelagee \* Lough Ouler \* Glenmacnass, Scarr \* Paddock Hill \* Wicklow Way \* Laragh

**Distance:** 21km  
**Ascent:** 1040m

**Maps:** OSI 56, East West (Wicklow Mountains West)

## Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> February

**Please bring a head torch on all late autumn/winter hikes.**

**\*\*\*Club Taster Hike\*\*\***

Newcomers please contact  
[info@hillwalkersclub.com](mailto:info@hillwalkersclub.com)

Leader: Michael Quinn

**2<sup>nd</sup> pick -up & drop-off point:** The Maldron Hotel

**Route:** Fenton's Imaal Bar \* Camara \* Lower Corrig \* Upper Corrig \* Percy's Table \* Lugnaquilla \* Return by same route\*

**Distance:** 13km  
**Ascent:** 900km

**Maps:** OSI 56, East West Mapping (Wicklow Mountains West)

## Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> February

**Please bring a head torch on all late autumn/winter hikes.**

Leader: Tom Lundy

**2<sup>nd</sup> pick-up & return drop-off point:** The Maldron Hotel, Tallaght.

**Route:** Seefin \* Seefingan \* Corrig \* Seahan \* Tallaght Hill \* Jobstown.

**Distance:** 17km  
**Ascent:** 700m

**Maps:** OSI 50, 56, East West Mapping (Dublin & North Wicklow Mountains)

### Sunday 23rd February

**Please bring a head torch on all late autumn/winter hikes.**

**Leader:** Mel O' Hara

**2<sup>nd</sup> pick-up & return drop-off point:**

Loughlinstown roundabout

**Route:** Knickeen Crossroads \* Table Track \* Camenabologue \* Lugnaquilla \* Fentons

**Distance:** TBC

**Ascent:** TBC

**Maps:**TBC

### Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> March

**Please bring a head torch on all late autumn/winter hikes.**

**Leader:** Ruth Murphy

**2<sup>nd</sup> pick-up & return drop-off point:**

Loughlinstown roundabout

**Route:** Wicklow Gap \* Tonelegee \* Brockagh Mtn \* Camaderry \* Turlough Hill & back to Wicklow Gap.

**Distance:** 17km

**Ascent:** 875m

**Maps:** OSI 56, East West (Wicklow Mountains West)

### Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> March

**Please bring a head torch on all late autumn/winter hikes.**

**Leader:** Brian Madden

**2<sup>nd</sup> pick-up & return drop-off point:**

Loughlinstown Roundabout.

**Route:** Ballylug forest entrance \* Aghowle via Cronybyrne \* Ballinastraw & Carrick

**Distance:** 15km

**Ascent:** 490m

**Maps:** OSI56, East West (Wicklow Mountains West)

### Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> March

**Please bring a head torch on all late autumn/winter hikes.**

**Leader:** Peter Gillett

**2<sup>nd</sup> pick-up & return drop-off point:** TBC

**Route:** TBC

**Distance:** TBC

**Ascent:** TBC

**Maps:**TBC

## Sunday 22nd March

**Please bring a head torch on all late autumn/winter hikes.**

**Leader:** Michael Quinn

2<sup>nd</sup> pick-up & return drop-off point: **TBC**

**Route:** Field trip & hike accompanied by a geological expert.

Distance: **TBC**

Ascent: **TBC**

Maps: **TBC**

## Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> March

**Please bring a head torch on all late autumn/winter hikes.**

**\*\*\*\* Day Trip To The Cooley's\*\*\*\***

**9.00am Bus Departure. €20 Fare.**

More information to follow.

**Leader:** Chris Byrne

**Route:** Windy Gap \* Foxes Rock \* Raven's Rock \* Split Rock \* Eagle's Rock \* Carlingford Mtn \* Slieve Foye, Barnavave, Famine Village \* Rooskey Loop \* Carlingford Village.

**Distance:** 15km

**Ascent:** 650m

## Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> April

**Please bring a head torch on all late autumn/winter hikes.**

**\*\*\*Club Taster Hike\*\*\***

Newcomers please contact  
[info@hillwalkersclub.com](mailto:info@hillwalkersclub.com)

**Leader:** Udo Sap

**2<sup>nd</sup> pick-up & return drop-off point:**  
Loughlinstown roundabout \* **Different Return**

**Route:** Sally Gap \* Carrigvore \* Military Rd.\* Lugala \* R.Clohoghe \* Pier Gates \* Wicklow Way \* Wite Hill \* Djouce \* Wicklow Way

Distance: **19km**

Ascent: **1140m**

**Maps:** OSI 56, East West (Wicklow Mountains West or Lugnaquilla & Glendalough)

## Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> April

**Please bring a head torch on all late autumn/winter hikes.**

**Leader:** Brian Madden

**\*\*\*\* Public Transport Hike\*\*\*\***

**Dart to Bray. Time TBC**

**Route:** New Bray to Sugar Loaf route, returning to Greystones.

Distance: **TBC**

Ascent: **TBC**

**Maps:** OSI 56, East West (Wicklow Mountains West)

# The Hillwalker's Social Calendar

<i>Friday 28<sup>th</sup> February</i>	<b>Céillí Night</b> Indulge in a slice of traditional Irish culture at The Teachers Club. (See next page for full details)
<i>Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> June</i>	<b>The Ring of Imaal</b> Challenge yourself to a tough 38km circular route. Details to be announced
<i>Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> July</i>	<b>Annual Summer BBQ</b> The annual summer barbeque will take place come shine or torrential rain and thunder storms (we are The Hillwalkers,damn it) It will probably finish up at The Palace too.
<i>Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> August</i>	<b>Zipit @ Tibradden</b> Take a break from the rustic simplicity of hillwalking & join us at Tibradden to be zip lined through the air at this scenic setting.
<i>October Bank Holiday</i>	<b>Trip to Dingle</b> Join Ruaidhrí for a weekend of hiking in one of the most breathtakingly beautiful areas of Ireland. (Pints may even be had)
<i>Saturday/Sunday 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> December</i>	<b>Christmas Party Weekend Extravaganza</b> Join your fellow hillwalkers for this weekend event to usher in the festive season. Two days of hiking. Saturday Dinner at the charming Wicklow Heather. Accommodation at Glendalough Hostel.
<i>Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> December</i>	<b>The Annual Holly Hike</b> Drape your finest velvetine Santa hat jauntily atop your head as Don leads us to through the winter wonderland of Wicklow to The Hollywood Inn for traditional pints & finger food. Is it even Christmas without it??

*The conception, design and words of the events calendar above are that of Aisling O' Keeffe and none other.*

# After a few requests and a lot of craic before the Hillwalkers in an Oige having another Ceili

What Ceili Irish traditional dancing.

Venue: **Teachers Club** Big Hall on Ground floor  
36 Parnell Square Dublin1.

When: **Friday 28<sup>th</sup> of February 2020** hall open from 8 pm.

Who: **Sean Treanor** to guide you to call out the dances.

**Jude Mc Hugh** to show you how it should be done.

**4 Irish professional musicians.**

**Pay €15.—into the account IE BOFI 9000313289018  
add your name until Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> of February:**

And let us know you've prepaid please e-mail:

1)itaohdubs@gmail.com

2)udosap@gmail.com

Also welcome to pay at the door.

**Raffle: between the dances on the night.**

**Hillwalkers, An Oige and friends all very welcome.**

**Social co-ordinator: Udo 087-7822888.**



*The conception, design, words & colour scheme of the flyer above are that of Udo Sap and none other.*

## Hillwalkers trip to Westport October 25 to 28 2019



*What happens in Westport stays in Westport. Or at least someone should tell that to Liz McWilliam because she spills all the beans below!*

Thirteen hillwalkers made their various ways to Westport for the October holiday weekend led by Soren Stuhr Mandrup. Accommodation was at the Mill House hostel in the centre of the town. It was definitely first there first served, the early birds got the best rooms, latecomers the large dorm, last to arrive, the top bunks! During the evening most of the group found their way to a packed Matt Molloy's, finding the way back to the hostel proved more challenging for some! As we were sharing the hostel with a small but boisterous stag group who partied all night a good night's sleep was a luxury denied to all but the soundest sleepers.

### **Route day 1**

From Lough an Foley, up An Scoltach Ridge to Maumtrasna Plateau (approx 17.6k and 956m) Setting off after our individually prepared breakfasts (Aisling with smoked salmon and scrambled eggs absolutely won the posh prize - discounting Udo and Brian Flynn who cheated by going out to eat) the bus collected us at 9.30 for the 40 minute drive to climb Maumtrasna (682m). Our contribution to the local community came early when we had to disentangle a sheep whose head was caught in a barbed wire fence. Soren, Brian Flynn and Udo performed the rescue efficiently even if the animal was not noticeably grateful.

Continuing our ascent initially in glorious sunshine which turned to hailstones, at first short lived then increasingly frequent. In between we had stunning views of Lough Mask. Lunch on the top with glorious views of steep gorges was spent half sun, half hail. Our route took us across the plateau then a descent back to the starting point for the bus. As we descended the hail turned to rain which became increasingly heavy but still none of us were sensible enough to don rain trousers. The descent was

also extremely muddy and slippery which made for numerous slips and slides. Photos of the fallers and sliders were strictly banned!

Finding a place for dinner proved challenging and rather later than intended as Westport was packed for a music festival and we were lucky to get in anywhere as a group. After an aperitif in MacBride bar we enjoyed a very good Indian meal at the Everest restaurant though it was apparently not hot or spicy enough for Aisling. Those well travelled in Everest regions were already well familiar with the food, the rest of us followed suit. Early night for most of us, even seasoned pub crawlers were prepared to call it a day long before closing time.

## Route day 2



Devils Mother, around valley of Glennagevlagh, descending by ridge of Letterbrickaun (approx. 13.5k, ascent 968m)

Most of us were refreshed after an earlier night and better sleep thanks to the now silent stag revellers. We were joined after breakfast by Ruaidhri who wisely opted to stay in a local B&B with his family. Starting at the foot of the Devil's Mother on a gloriously sunny day we made the steep ascent to the top. Laura and Neville were so full of energy after a tame Saturday evening that they opted to leave the rest of us to add extra kilometres to their tally. Fantastic views of Killary Fjord on the way down and the mountain we had climbed in the morning looked really impressive as we descended.

Back at sea level we had a short walk to the pub for a celebratory drink. No sign of Laura and Neville who claimed they had done a longer hike but were eventually located and collected from a nearby hostelry.

Back to the hostel Ruth felt she had not had enough exercise so went for a swim at the local leisure centre. Difficulties arose over dinner, everywhere full. Peter managed to secure a table for eight at a nearby restaurant (which was unfortunately hosting a book reading and required our party to keep noise levels down), the rest of us went to the Cobblers bar/restaurant in town). A few last drinks for some after dinner and that was it.

No hike scheduled for Monday so we went our separate ways. While Soren, Brian Murphy, Caitríona, Peter, Aisling and Terry headed straight back to Dublin others decided to prolong the weekend as it was a lovely day. Top of the list were Laura and Neville who still feeling fully fit opted to climb

Mweelrea at 814m. Next Brian Flynn and Udo decided to walk part of the Bangor trail. Liz and Mary took the pensioners option, a short walk round Westport Harbour followed by a gentle stroll through the grounds of Westport House before heading back to Dublin. Ruth decided to forgo walking in favour of an energetic cycle.

Congratulations and thanks to Soren on his first 'solo' weekend particularly so soon after jointly leading the August weekend in Kerry.

\*\*\*\*\*



*Photo – Laura Grealish*



*Photo – Laura Grealish*

*The words of the article above are that of Liz McWilliam and none other.*

## Four Hillwalkers Get Snowed In (of their own Volition) In Scotland



*Photo – Shauna O’ Hara*

*Four of our club members, Liz McWilliam, Shauna O’ Hara, Geraldine Connolly & Warren Lawless went on a solo run to Scotland for some valuable winter skills training. Warren Lawless reports back on their weekend of knowledge accumulation and debaucherous free time.*

### **Scottish Winter Skills Course, 13<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> December 2019**

For several years I had been saying I must follow in the footsteps of Mel, Frank & Anne-marie and do a winter-skills course in Scotland. The latter had done the Mountaineering Ireland course run every February and it came highly recommended, but this always seemed to clash with other hiking opportunities.

I had used crampons & ice-axe before in the Apennines, Atlas and Alps, but I wanted to get formal training. A gang of us had turned up in Scotland in 2019 armed with crampons, ice-axe and a hired instructor...but there was nae snow! Lots of good hiking ensued, but I was still hankering to learn more.

Shauna was of a similar mind and so I readily joined a little foray she proposed, to do a 2-day Winter Skills course offered by Mountaineering Scotland. Geraldine Connolly and Liz McWilliams made up the rest of our gang.

Among the items to be covered by the course were

- Use of Ice-axe for walking and self-arrest.
- Fitting & use of crampons.
- Navigation, pacing & contouring.

- Snow shelter construction
- Winter weather assessment & Avalanche awareness

Informal tips and techniques were also picked-up: we learned to ‘Penguin’ whenever we stopped, forming a tight circle to minimise buffeting by the wind, a valid tactic in the wintery winds, which at one stage were up to 70 km per hour, in -12 degree temperatures.

Unfortunately, there were no safely accessible areas of ice/frozen snow to practise using crampons in the end. However, given the snowless conditions in February and those that resulted immediately after our course (due to the mild Christmas weather), we were satisfied to have been able to do the bulk of the training in magical winter conditions.

On our drive from Edinburgh airport, we were somewhat nervous at the sight of the very brown hills we passed, and so let out a cheer when we spotted snowy peaks in the distance and we were not to be disappointed on the snow front.

Having stocked up on essentials in Aviemore, we drove off into a dark wood in search of our base: this was the charming Mill’s Cottage, c.14 beds with a decent kitchen and a cosy common room. Opening it up, we discovered a warm wood-stove fire burning invitingly and quickly claimed a room, loaded our gear & shopping and settled in to cook, chat and sip.

The cottage is open to Mountaineering Scotland members and we shared it with the other 8 members of our course and a few folk camping outside. The rest of the course joined us and we totalled 5 Irish, 3 Scottish, 2 English and 2 Dutch. We also met our instructors, Dye & Helen (Morning). The latter it turns out had 17 years Mountain Rescue experience and was no stranger to appearing in front of *BBC Scotland* cameras to share details of rescues and fatalities. She was assisted by Mike, another Scottish Mountain Rescue volunteer.

Our two day-long sessions would start with map and weather-forecasts, with an emphasis on wind direction (where has the snow been scoured from or gathered?) and avalanche assessments. For this we availed of the detailed mountain forecasts issued daily by the Scottish metrological service. We would then travel to our chosen hill-range and combine walking with instruction, stopping in certain suitable ground to practise specific skills. Afterwards back in the cottage or pub we would discuss the day’s learning points. Later we would enjoy food, fire and a tippie back in our cottage (though a tippie turned into a topple for Liz!).



- One of the highlights of the course for me, was building snow shelters for the first time. We used super-light shovels (with detachable handles for easy packing). The aim is to end with a small cave that allows you to sit naturally (using your backpack as a seat) so that only your feet are in contact with the snow. In twenty minutes or so, you could make something that might be the difference between a very cold night or death. My humble abode won an approving comment from Helen, though my zig-zagging while leading us up a slope on a bearing was deemed ‘ungenerous’ as I was climbing too steeply for some.

Special mention must be made of Liz who impressed the hardy Helen with her relentless energy and ability on the mountains; Liz was hailed by Helen as her hero and future-role-model ...so it’s probably as well she didn’t hear of how Liz later tripped over while hopping around in her sleeping bag. She denies there was any wine involved...



*Photo – Shauna O'Hara*

Apart from the training and learning, we also got in two very satisfying snow hikes, up to a snow-encased *Cairngorm (1245M)* and then on the hills near *Sgor Gaoith*. The training was done in good walking conditions, with clear skies, sunshine, stunning scenery, with good snow underfoot. The weather though was still wintery and all the equipment on the course-list was required for the cold & wind, including ski-goggles, neck-buff & good wind/snow-proof gloves. Snow baskets for the sticks were also useful, to prevent the sticks sinking too deep.

I would recommend the Mountaineering Scotland course and it is reasonably priced, even though MS membership is required as a prerequisite. The longer MI course is also available and has been announced for February 2020.

After a group clean-up of the cottage, we had a relaxing last night and we were away early next morning to the airport, stopping only for a delicious breakfast in Pitlochry, followed by a memorable rendition of *Frozen's 'Let It Go'* in the car. You had to be there...

Webcams of *Cairngorm* now show brown slopes denuded of snow so we were lucky the week we were there (though hopefully it will return, for those hiking and making a living there). Thanks to Shauna for organising an instructive and fun trip.

\*\*\*\*\*

*The words of the article above are that of Warren Lawless and none other.*

## Winter Rucksack Essentials - *Russell Mills*

---

### 12 things you should definitely carry in your winter rucksack:

Hiking in the winter can be an exhilarating experience, with crisp clear air and stunning views.

However, it also carries inherent risks, reduced daylight hours, winter storms and biting cold temperatures are ever present problems.

To protect yourself from the worst that the winter may throw at you, and to help ensure a enjoyable and safe day in the hills, be prepared by carrying these essential items in your winter pack.

1. **Waterproof drybags.** Put those items that you want to ensure stay dry into drybags for extra protection from the winter weather. Use a rucksack liner too, to ensure all your kit stays well protected from the elements.
2. **Waterproof Jacket & Pants.** Invest in a good waterproof jacket and waterproof pants. These are essential items to ward off both rain and cold winds. Inadequate protection from either can make you uncomfortable at best, and at worst can lead to hypothermia, as the chilling effects of wet clothes and high winds are greatly increased in winter. Choose one with a breathable membrane to reduce moisture building up inside, and ensure it has either waterproof zips or storm flaps to cover the zip, this will prevent water ingress through the front. Make sure it has a good integral hood too, that is adjustable.
3. **Gloves & Hats.** Take several pairs. You will often see lost gloves and hats in the hills, so take spares to use in case you lose one. It's also great to change into dry gloves half way through a wet day. Fleece gloves are ideal for most conditions, but be prepared to upgrade to insulated and waterproof gloves when the weather dictates.
4. **Warm spare layer.** You may have an enforced stop in the mountains, maybe a colleague has an injury, or perhaps you are stopping for lunch in an exposed spot. In this scenario a spare warm layer is ideal. A synthetic (primaloft) insulated jacket is best, it can be put over your existing clothing, including wet waterproofs, and will warm you up straight away. A fleece jacket could be an alternative, but they are not windproof, so you would need to put it on under your windproof layer.
5. **Food and Drink.** Always ensure you have plenty of high calorie food available, and bring extra in case you are delayed and have to spend more time outdoors. There is no rule concerning how much liquid you should take, though 1.5 litres is a good guide. Take a hot drink in a flask when it is going to be cold.
6. **First Aid Kit.** A bare minimum would be an 'ouch-pouch', this could consist of sticking plaster, antiseptic wipes and blister plasters, such as Compeed. You may feel you want a more comprehensive kit, but do get training in this case, and do not carry what you are not competent to use.
7. **Survival bag.** This is rather like a plastic sleeping bag, bright orange, lightweight and cheap, and everyone should carry one in their pack. In emergency situations you can climb into this bag and it will protect you from the worst of the weather. They have often been attributed with saving lives in the mountains. You might consider upgrading this to a 'blizzard' bag, which has some added insulation.
8. **A group shelter.** Also known as an emergency or survival shelter, this is a plastic tent-like cover that a group of people can get into to give protection from the elements. They come in various sizes from 2 to 10 person, and would be used to protect a casualty or as a shelter on an exposed lunch stop. If you are hiking as part of a group then a larger one could be carried between you.
9. **Head Torch.** Essential in winter, and a good idea all year round, a head torch will provide you with light to get off the mountain should you be caught out in the dark, it can also be used for signalling for help. It's a good idea to carry extra batteries, or a spare torch in addition.
10. **Map and compass.** Essential items for all hillwalkers, do not rely on smartphone apps as they can get wet and cold and then fail. Carrying a map and compass is not enough on its' own, you need to be confident and competent in their use. If you are not sure how to navigate yourself around the mountains with a map and compass then go on a course to learn how to master these essential skills.
11. **Emergency whistle.** Many rucksacks now come with an integral whistle in the chest strap. Six one second blasts on the whistle, repeated after a short break, is the internationally recognised emergency signal. The reply from the rescuers is three blasts. It makes sense to carry one.
12. **Duct Tape.** This amazing versatile tape has a myriad of uses, from repairing torn waterproofs to temporary boot repairs. (Wrap some round your water bottle or walking pole).

Finally, a word of caution. If you want to experience hiking in snow conditions, then the higher mountains are the place to go, but unless you are equipped with ice axe and crampons, (and know how to use them), stay away from deeply frozen icy ground. Be prepared to back off if the conditions get very slippery with ice and consolidated frozen snow.