MI Consultation
I attended a recent MI consultation for the next four year plan. This was a Zoom meeting held in an evening. While welcome, I come away thinking that this sort of consultation resembles a commercial product focus group, rather than an attempt to build consensus amongst the membership. It would have been much better if the promised breakout groups had taken place. However, let’s park that discussion for now.

Low carbon hillwalking
One point that I raised was that a body like MI, active and concerned as it is with the environment, needs to have a position and plan with regard to climate change and having a role in reducing the carbon emissions of the sports it represents.

I was interested to hear that MI has started to consider this issue and is consulting (or has?) with what it considers its sister organisations on the subject. I think it would be fair to say that MI has not yet got a developed policy on the subject - and I think the sister organisations such as the BMC are only at an initial stage. In my view this is going to be a major issue for hill sports such as hillwalking in future. I would say two things: whatever policy is developed should be put together with the hillwalking committee and that as far as ideas from abroad are concerned, MI should look at what the UK Ramblers are doing, see the interesting approach at www.ramblers.org.uk/policy/england/countryside/climate-change.aspx

This quarterly
In this issue of MV’s quarterly we revisit Cuilcagh. Toughsoles wrote this up in a recent blog which we have reprinted. We were very impressed by their fresh and astute observations about the path and board walk there such as “It’s a gravel road and a short boardwalk, through a landscape that is only famous because of the marks we have made on it.”

Fergal Hingerty has shared information about a trip to Slovakia which he had visited from Poland. It looks extremely attractive as an area. Incidentally we note that Fergal has become the first person to complete the 337 “Carns”, MV’s list of 400 to 500m hills.

Mathematicians, lovers of curiosity and even ‘metric martyrs’ may relish the strange outcome of a speculation by George Leclerc, the Comte de Buffon as applied to determining how long a walk is from a map.

For those interested in Challenge Walks, Peter Walker describes his preparation for a good time doing the Mourne 7 by 7s.

The Twelve Bens from near the crannog on Lough Fadda, Roundstone Bog
Feeling queasy? A hard night? Had a leg operation lately? Admit it, your pins aren’t up to much today. In that case, bag an easy top at the Spire of Lloyd near Kells, County Meath. It’s literally a two-minute stroll up from the carpark. You can stretch it into a proper walk as outlined by Geo in the following post of Oct 14.

When in the heritage town of Kells, take the R163 road for Oldcastle about 2km out from the town centre. A sign (easily missed) for the People’s Park points the way to the right up the cul-de-sac to the car park.

As mentioned in another comment, in addition to ticking off a summit, one can take a wander about the famine burial area, the Spire itself (occasionally open if there on the right day) and also if in the humour for a walk, take the tracks to the North side of the playground which circuit some of the large fields and take you down to the R147, crossing this follow the (somewhat poorly) marked Riverside walk along the Blackwater, passing the old Victorian waterworks, by the edge of the Business Park and returning across the R147 again and back up to the return track up to the Spire again. About 45mins of a walk. There are (weather permitting) great views from this hilltop.

Original comment: [mountainviews.ie/summit/1520/comment/23310/](mountainviews.ie/summit/1520/comment/23310/)
For peat’s sake…

Geo bemoans endless encounters with peat hags in his trek across the forgettable Knockalongys in Sligo’s Ox Mountains. Of course, one person’s forgettable is another’s sublime.

Link: mountainviews.ie/summit/366/comment/23305/

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The high point that’s below the summit.

Roscommon’s highest point is interesting as it is located not at the top of a hill, but on the slope below, in this case that of Seltannasaggart, write Tough Soles.

Link: mountainviews.ie/summit/1055/comment/23291/

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Thick skin recommended

Barbed wire and brambles aplenty await on Croaghan Hill in Donegal, writes dino, but the views of the Bluestacks make it worth the effort.

Link: mountainviews.ie/summit/1028/comment/23302/

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Distant views, distant past.

Besides enjoying views as far as Scotland, Carntogher in the Sperrins features a range of historical monuments dating from the Neolithic to the 19th century, writes pdtempan.

Link: mountainviews.ie/summit/567/comment/23288/
As old as the hills
Slieveanard NE is an unremarkable hill redeemed somewhat by the presence of an ancient circular structure at the summit, writes Colin Murphy.
Link: mountainviews.ie/summit/626/comment/23298/

The prettier path
Kanturk in Wicklow is a fairly dull affair, but the experience may be enhanced considerably by approaching from the track hugging Lough Dan, says Colin Murphy.
Link: mountainviews.ie/summit/1469/comment/23290/

Jagged edges
Fine views of the Galtys are to be had from this hill, which is topped by a series of jagged boulders, reports Colin Murphy.
Link: mountainviews.ie/summit/629/comment/23296/
This month's selection (from not that many!) comes courtesy of Bunsen7 and an exploration of the south side of the Galtees. The route visits 6 VLs, including the high summits of Temple Hill, Lyracappul and Carrignabinnia, and the text outlines some entertaining overhead fauna that he experienced. Good photos too.

**LENGTH:** 14.3km  
**TIME TAKEN:** 4h 57m  
**ASCENT:** 1023m  
**DESCENT:** 1042m  
**PLACES:** Start at R86899 19663, Monabrack, Carrignabinnia, Lyracappul, Knockaterriff Beg, Knockaterriff, Temple Hill, end at Start.  
**Link:** [mountainviews.ie/track/report/4564/](http://mountainviews.ie/track/report/4564/)
NORTH:
Lies, damned lies, you know the rest
News from the Mournes where it seems that Onzy's GPS is on the fritz again (MI's 'Irish Peaks' book is accurate when it describes his outing over Meelbeg, Meelmore and Bearnagh as having 850m of ascent, although the flog up the latter probably feels worth an extra 300m or so). It's a good introduction to the Mournes though, and no mistake.
Link: mountainviews.ie/track/report/4567/

SOUTH-WEST:
A piece of (rocky rocky road) cake…
Some might say that calling yourself The Big Hill and only being 309m high was somewhat misleading, but simon3 discovered that An Bheann Mhór had a few tricks up its sleeve. So it is that his track spends over three hours on just over 6km, tussling with benches, ravines and dinosaurs, possibly. The views are excellent though.
Link: mountainviews.ie/track/4562/
Carl and Ellie of Tough Soles toughsoles.ie/ were the first to complete the walking of all of Ireland’s National Waymarked Trails (Republic anyway), and since this achievement have continued to extensively document and participate in the island’s outdoors scene.

One of their current projects is to complete Ireland’s 27 County Highpoints, and during the course of their efforts they have visited Cuilcagh, the huge high plateau on the Cavan/Fermanagh border. Here we are printing an entry from their blog where they ruminate upon the mountain and in particular the so-called ‘Stairway To Heaven’.

Cuilcagh is a mountain on the borders of Counties Cavan and Fermanagh. Standing at 666m tall, it has a distinctive plateau shape, with steep walls climbing up to a long, flat summit area. Our sights were first set on this mountain as part of our high points project, where Carl and I look to climb to the highest point of every county in Ireland. Cuilcagh counts for two counties - Cavan and Fermanagh. However, over the past few years the area of Cuilcagh has become famous for a new, man-made feature: the stairway to heaven.

I think, to talk about this highpoint is to talk about a few different things, things that Carl and I have been learning over the past several years. When we started walking all of Ireland’s National Waymarked Trails in 2017, we were naive, young trail wanderers, heading off on an adventure that we thought would only take six months.

Over 4,000km and many years later (it’s 2021), we can no longer go blindly. Many of the mountains we will look to climb will have their own unique issues and considerations.

Such as Cuilcagh.

Cuilcagh is home to a large blanket bog - which admittedly, to Irish
eyes, can look like a fairly familiar and unremarkable thing. However, as an environmental habitat, it is an increasingly rare and precious thing. Because of this, Cuilcagh is a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and is being lovingly restored. Alongside this, there has been a trail up Cuilcagh for quite some time. Several years ago, the issue of human impacts on the bog from this trail were noted. And through a series of events, the large boardwalk that stands there today was built, the intention being that it would help mitigate the human impact.

One viral video later, and Cuilcagh has gone from seeing around 3,000 people per year, to over 100,000 visitors between March and September in 2021. At first, the top of the boardwalk was open, and people would regularly get lost on the mountain top due to the heavy clouds that can blow across the plateau at any time. Huge scares of trails criss crossed the summit, and litter left along the boardwalk became more and more of an issue. Further work has been done, and a viewing platform now contains visitors at the top of the route, with the hope of minimising further damage.

The tricky thing about the outdoors, is that as more people live in urban spaces, easy to access, famous outdoor places are a necessary part of the cycle for helping people to experience, and then fall in love with our many different outdoor environments. Once people can experience the magic of the outdoors, they become protectors of it.

I think, the problem from my experience of Cuilcagh, is that it doesn’t facilitate that falling in love. It’s a gravel road and a short boardwalk, through a landscape that is only famous because of the marks we have made on it.

People go to see the “Stairway to Heaven”, not the mountain it is built on. The battle with Cuilcagh is that it is an increasingly popular place, because this white line across the landscape is so visual. If you look at that white line while walking, it is certainly interesting. However, as soon as you hold a camera in front of it, it almost becomes mesmerising, this snake of white across the dark bog.

When we walked the boardwalk we didn’t want to add to the damage from this side, so we walked to the viewing platform and then turned around and walked back. What many people don’t realise is that the photos you see from the top of the boardwalk looking down at the trail - is that most of that white snake is a gravel road, not twisting boardwalk.

We reached the summit of Cuilcagh a month later, when walking a section of the Ulster Way. This trail approached the peak from the north east, and was an intense scramble that we can only recommend to
very experienced hill walkers. We touched the summit while engulfed in clouds, cold and wet and windswept.

As I said at the summit, we've now been up this mountain two ways, and neither felt quite like the right way.

I understand that it is easy for me to say that there are many more beautiful walks out there - I've had the amazing experience of seeing them, and being there, and experiencing some of the best places this island has. Unfortunately, the way Cuilcagh is now, I find it hard to know if people can fall in love with it the same way.

If you are going up the boardwalk, try to avoid peak times, be gentle to the bog land around you, and bring all rubbish home with you, including food waste.

**Final Thoughts from MountainViews:**
MountainViews very much share the concerns and misgivings outlined by Toughsoles (see [mountainviews.ie/newsletters/month/2017-09/#cuilcagh](http://mountainviews.ie/newsletters/month/2017-09/#cuilcagh) for instance). We are also linking to their Cuilcagh video in this newsletter.
EXPLORE

SLOVAKIA’S MALÁ FATRA MOUNTAINS

Approaching the summit of Veľký Rozsutec

Fergal Hingerty takes a hike to one of the highest summits in this central European range.

Veľký Rozsutec

The Malá Fatra is a National Park quite close to the city of Žilina in Slovensko (Slovakia). It covers an area of 233 square kilometres, and is a tree-lined and mountainous area. The National Park is home to a wide variety of flora and fauna including bears, wild boars, lynxes and wolves.

It was a late start on this hill so we would experience the mid-day sun on the climb. Myself and my fellow climber had driven down from a village called Bukowina in Poland, where we stayed the previous night, and arrived at 10 am at an area called Štefanová very close to the village of Terchová.

Terchová and the surrounding area are famous for being the area where Slovakia’s highwayman and folk hero lived; Juraj Jánošík was active in the area in the late 17th century and many legends and tales were written about his exploits. Thankfully there are no highwaymen in the Malá Fatra these days as it is a very safe area. Apart from the bears!

From checking the chart on a nearby information map board, the green trail was the one we decided we would follow. We parked

Map of the area, route marked in pink
at the car park (625 metres) and shortly afterwards we found that green trail and headed up through the trees.

This was an alternating mix of shade and sunshine we ascended step by step until we arrived at the grass crossroads of Sedlo Medziholie (1185 Metres). Here we stopped for a breather and the essential sunscreen and water. Despite going higher, for once the temperature actually increased rather than dropped. The signpost pointed North but with no cloud it was obvious to continue following the red trail this time.

We turned east and headed up the hill towards a small forest, and now the ascent actually got much steeper. After a short climb through the green pine-like forest the path turned to the left and we turned into the low shrubbery that this region is famous for.

That was traversed quickly before taking an essential stop for some more sunscreen to be applied along with some much needed water to hydrate. We than decided to always climb earlier in the day in summer in the future even if it meant staying nearby.

Now the interesting part of the climb began, the scramble up via fixed chains. The heat was beaming down from above and people were descending as we were climbing. Like Rysy, this made it a bit more challenging as you had to step away from the fixed chain and grip the rock somewhere to let people descend. Naturally, that is easier said than done. Sometimes the place to grip the smooth rock is not always that obvious!

After a short but challenging ascent we arrived at the summit and the whole vista of the valley with Štefanová could be seen to the north with a view of lower hills to the south. The summit is marked with a large cross and a small height marker (1610 metres).

Veľký Rozsutec is the third highest mountain in the Malá Fatra area, the highest being the grassy summit of Veľký Fatranský Kriváň which is 1709 metres. However, this more challenging rocky summit is nearly as popular.

After a while we headed down the narrow path through the trees to another junction at Sedlo Medzirozsutce (1200 Metres) with yet another excellent sign-post. There are a couple of small peaks here but we decided
to head northwest along the blue trail towards the Horné Diery and Dolné Diery waterfalls which we descended via platforms, fixed chains and ladders for four kilometres. This was not on our agenda when we arrived, but we were more than happy to experience this fantastic water-based track. This is 4 km long and descends 700 metres; it can be wet and slippy in spots but then it is beside waterfalls the whole way! This eventually led to a track which led around the widening river further down to another junction called Podziar (715 metres), where there was a small hut there selling pivo (beer). It was very tempting in the heat, but we decided to continue on and the beer would have to wait. We then headed along the yellow trail up a small grassy hill and the final descent back to Štefanová and the car park.

Overall the climb took a leisurely 7 hours or thereabouts.

It should be noted that the national Park rules state you must stick to the tracks in this area. With bears and wolves wandering around maybe this is a very good rule!

This area is accessible from Bratislava to the south, Poprad to the North or a short drive over the Polish border. There are many places to stay here in this area (especially Terchová a few km away) both summer and winter as it is a popular winter sports area with ski lifts in other sections of the National Park.

A few websites for the area
www.terchova.sk/
slovakia.travel/en/places-to-go/breathtaking-slovakia/velkey-rosutec
slovakia.travel/en/national-park-of-mala-fatra
And now for something different: MountainViews presents an unexpectedly easy way to estimate your walking distance from an OS map with the usual grid (1km). Since the result appears in miles, this will warm the cockles of the heart of any traditionalist still attached to this archaic unit, not one the wholly metric MountainViews has ever bothered with.

This article is a shortened version of one by Ben Craven, a UK Hillwalker, who gave us permission to use it. The full version is here: bencraven.org.uk/2020/08/05/why-hillwalkers-should-love-the-comte-de-buffon/ Many thanks to Ben. It’s not his fault the result comes out in miles, it’s the maths.

Wandering the mountains of the UK has been a big part of my life. You won’t be surprised that before I start a long walk I like to know roughly what I’m letting myself in for. One part of this is estimating how far I’ll be walking.
Several decades ago my fellow student and hillwalking friend David told me of a quick and simple way to estimate the length of a walk. It uses the grid of kilometre squares that is printed on the Ordnance Survey maps that UK hillwalkers use. [Same with OS maps and others in Ireland]

To estimate the length of the walk, count the number of grid lines that the route crosses, and divide by two. This gives you an estimate of the length of the walk in miles.

Yes, miles, even though the grid lines are spaced at kilometre intervals. On the right you can see a made-up example. The route crosses 22 grid lines, so we estimate its length as 11 miles.

How good is this measure, and why do we get an estimate in miles when the grid lines are a kilometre apart?

I've investigated the maths involved, and here are the headlines. They are valid for walks of typical wiggliness; the rule isn't reliable for a walk that unswervingly follows a single compass bearing.

- On average, the estimated distance is close to the actual distance: in the long run the rule overestimates the lengths of walks by 2.4%.
- There is, of course, some random variation from walk to walk. For walks of about 10 miles, about two-thirds of the time the estimated length of the walk will be within 7% of the actual distance.
- The rule works because 1 mile just happens to be very close to π/2 kilometres.

The long-run overestimation of 2.4% is tiny: it amounts to only a quarter-mile in a 10-mile walk. The variability is more serious: about a third of the time the estimate will be more than 7% out. But other imponderables (such as the nature of the ground, or getting lost) will have a bigger effect than this on the effort or time needed to complete a walk, so I don't think it's a big deal.

In conclusion, for a rule that is so quick and easy to use, this rule is good enough for me. Which is just as well, because I've been using it unquestioningly for the past 35 years.

And the Comte de Buffon?

George-Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon, (1707-1788) was a French intellectual with no recorded interest in hillwalking. But he did consider the following problem, known as Buffon's Needle:

[en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Buffon%27s_needle_problem]
‘IT’S BETTER TO TRAIN LIKE A #$@&%%*! THAN TO FADE AWAY…’

THE SEVEN SEVENS IN MIDDLE AGE by Peter Walker

As a hillwalker of 40 years standing (and moving, and sitting down) like most folk I go through phases. Sometimes I’m quite fit, sometimes less so. Sometimes I can be bothered to run myself into the ground maybe three or four lunchtimes a week, sometimes I can eat an entire Viennetta in one sitting. Periodically I wondered if I could kick myself up a level; turns out all I needed was a ‘fortuitous’ once-in-a-century pandemic to put flesh (or extra slow-twitch fibres) on those bones. Maybe I could actually go from ‘above average mountain walker’ to ‘rubbish mountain runner’ if I put the work in.

‘We can rebuild him…’

A sudden interest in sports science, a lot more (and mostly slower) running, and much more actual weekend hillwalking (courtesy of the inimitable Bleck Cra and his Sunday ‘getting people ready for challenge walking’ group of victims) certainly seemed to improve my performance, something that was (slightly pathetically) confirmed by a couple of visits to a sports lab for one of those ‘put a mask on and run till you’re sick’ tests. But I’m the sort of person who ultimately needs an actual objective lest all the good intentions flounder, and so it was that (together with Nuala and Shauna from the Sunday group) that I signed up for the Mourne Seven Sevens, six years after I’d last done it. That time I kinda spoofed my way to a respectable time (9hrs 7mins) largely courtesy of a couple of months of crash dieting, but this time despite the extra age I had some confidence that the newly acquired fitness might allow me to gain a satisfactory time: by ‘satisfactory’ I mean ‘something that wouldn’t disappoint me to a level where I’d feel obliged to do the damned thing again’.

Game face

A week of tapered exercise and a huge number of bagels smothered in peanut butter (carb loading!) found me checking in at Shimna College on a day with weather designed to

The low ebb at the Meelbeg/Meelmore colDouglas Reid
remove any excuses about conditions. The course was being covered in a clockwise direction, and my tactics were very simple: try not to stop. At all. Eating, drinking and navigating would all be done on the move, ideally. So, it proved on a non-stop ascent of Donard, and a quick check of the watch on the top suggested that it had taken 67 minutes; that seemed a bit over-quick, so I immediately dialled the speed back a bit for the plod up Commedagh. (I also resolved not to look at the clock again; that way madness lay, so I would just go by ‘feel’.)

Down to the Brandy Pad, up over Slieve Beg, contouring Cove and then pulling up Lamagan. I felt pretty comfortable before the notorious descent to the col under Binnian (even though I’m relatively quicker on ascents than descents, I still far prefer descending this slope than climbing up the bloody thing). Here I had the great good fortune to catch up to Nuala and Shauna from their earlier start time, and ‘generously’ allowed Nuala (who is renowned for having the descending skills of a mountain goat) to pace me down the fractured mountainside. Long pull up Binnian, still comfortable, and the return to the col saw a very quick (90 seconds) pitstop to get a stone out of my left boot. A scamper down to and across the Ben Crom Dam (generally considered the halfway point), the dreaded boggy indistinct stretch up the Ben Crom River...still no stops.

But on the sharp climb up Meelbeg the wheelnuts came loose, and the abject sudden pump in my legs induced several breathless stops. Struggling onwards I slowed a bit to get my heart rate under my anaerobic threshold, chugged some energy gels, was greeted by a grinning Bleck Cra, and began to feel more human on the descent from Meelmore. A couple of quick rests dispatched the vicious climb up Bearnagh, and the knowledge that from here it was basically straightforwardly downhill from this point meant that I could ease off on the holding back.

It was a smooth descent through the myriad of path options to Hare’s Gap, and I tried to press on a bit around the Brandy Pad to the Saddle under Donard. Here an offhand comment from the marshall let slip those seven hours had elapsed since I started; in advance I’d quietly said I thought sub-eight might just be on, and here I was with the prospect of going a fair bit faster than that. Suffice to say I ran down the Glen River, slaloming through the startled masses before slowing to a walk once I was in sight of the finish (like you do).

Lies. Damned lies. Statistics...

7hrs 36mins. 14th out of 222 starters. (And it would have been 61st out of 65 in the runners’ race; so, I’m a rubbish runner after all. Result!)

I was ‘quite chuffed’ with this, so retreated to the car for an unmanly moment.

Manliness restored, Cra, Gerard (Shauna’s dad) et al awaited the arrival of the girls, which happened 9hrs 16mins after they left; a damned good effort for a first go.

For a ‘much longer and better’ version of this article (The Author) or ‘Something that badly needs editing’ (The Editor), please go to mountainviews.ie/tracker/report/4460/

Much wonderful material for the Challenge walker from the fevered pen of Jim Holmes, can be found at mountainviews.ie/challengecalendar/(and not just a calendar).
Recently the Mourne Outdoor Recreation Forum (MORF) met for the first time since the outbreak of the pandemic. Amongst many subjects discussed were walker numbers during this period, and MV (who are represented on the forum) thought it would be interesting for our readers to see how outdoor recreational behaviour was affected in these unusual times.

MV would speculate that this is a trend in evidence elsewhere on the island of Ireland. MV would further speculate that this is a trend that is aligned with the “Great Resignation” noted in many western countries where people are changing or leaving employment, often for quality of life reasons.

Of course, we could be getting ahead of ourselves here. Could be that the figures from the Mournes are more to do with lockdowns and lack of other outlets for outdoor recreation and lack of holidays abroad. Time will tell.

Article courtesy of the Mourne Heritage Trust. See www.facebook.com/mournelive/

WALKER NUMBERS UP IN THE MOURNES – A PORTENT FOR ALL OF IRELAND?

MOURNE VISITOR COUNTS INCREASES 2019 – 2021: KEY HIGHLIGHTS

Overall

Counters at key locations (see below) recorded 767,293 visitors in 2020, up by 263,883 on the 2019 total of 503,410 – an increase of 52.4%. However, these counts include lockdown periods. The percentage increase since end of the Covid lockdown in May was 86%, an almost doubling of access.
Locations are Carrick Little; Castlewellan Lake; Glen River 3rd Bridge; Glen River Car Park; Granite Trail; Ott Track; Trassey Track.

*Use was particularly concentrated at peak times after first lockdown ended*

On 30/31 May (the weekend after the late May Bank Holiday) numbers at Carrick little Black Gate (Slieve Binnian) were 2721, up from 1011 on the bank holiday weekend in 2019. At Glen River (Slieve Donard) the counts were up to 4296 from 1490 the previous year. Numbers at Donard were therefore three times the previous year and at Binnian over two and a half times.

*Increases were sustained through the summer of 2020*

Glen River recorded a peak monthly count of 21,300 in July 2020. The figure for July 2019 was 15,729. Carrick Little saw 18,350 in that month against 11,555 the previous year.

Sites away from the main honeypots of Donard and Binnian saw biggest proportionate increases

Ott track saw 13,944 visitors in August 2020 up hugely from 3,594 in August 2019; a more than threefold increase. The increase across the calendar year for that site was almost threefold, again including periods of lockdown.

Trassey Track saw an increase from 6,143 to 13,944 in the August of 2019 and 2020 respectively, more than doubling. The year total was also more than double.

*Relative increases were even more pronounced in Autumn/Winter*

In October, November, December across all sites visitors increased by 105%, 168% and 168% respectively in October, November and December. This means that what were previously summer levels of access occurred in conditions where habitats are most vulnerable to erosion.

To put this in perspective the total counts for November and December 2020 exceeded that for June 2019 and were at 90% of the count for July 2019.

Early 2021 counts show access levels being sustained

Across four sites – Carrick Little, Castlewellan Lake, Ott and Trassey - for which counts are available to date the total percentage increase from pre-pandemic levels was 78% and the counts were up on 2020 levels by 30%. When Castlewellan Lake is excluded, the increase for the three mountain access routes is 110% on 2019 - more than a doubling of numbers - and 37% on 2020.

The biggest proportionate increase was at Ott where, as at end of June, the counts had increased by 185% over the equivalent months of 2019, numbers therefore remaining at almost three times what they were pre-pandemic.

1 Up to between end May and end August depending on site

2 It should be borne in mind that in some of the early months of 2020 access levels were depressed by Covid restrictions, but nonetheless it can be concluded that there has yet been no sign of any levelling off or reduction in the levels of the peak levels of access in 2020 even as restrictions have lifted.
Slievenashaska S to the left, the “Dromtine ridge” to the right. 📸 simon3
Original comment: mountainviews.ie/track/4560/
Carl and Ellie of *Tough Soles* visit Cuilcagh and the ‘Stairway to Heaven’ (see article)
youtube.com/watch?v=IQhFM-JQ5pU&t=93s

MV user *gerrym* takes his bivvy bag into the Nephin Begs
youtube.com/watch?v=o4GnGMJiS9E

*Tough Soles* tackle one of the more straightforward County Highpoints
youtube.com/watch?v=ShUhlM_mrdsA
NOTICES

- If you are contributing, please be careful to respect the interests of landowners. Suggest access routes well away from houses, gardens or that could conceivably impact farming activities. When walking, keep away from gardens or farm buildings. Use stiles or gates wherever possible. Never do anything that could allow animals to roam where the farmer did not intend. Ask permission where appropriate.

- Report suspicious activity to the police forces, as below.

- If your car is broken into in an upland area report it to the PSNI or Gardai as this will help them be aware of the issue and tackle it in future. Store the numbers. In Northern Ireland use the PSNI non-emergency number 0845 600 8000. In the Republic you can find the local Garda District HQs phone numbers at www.garda.ie/Stations/Default.aspx. Specifically for the hotspot of Wicklow: the Garda Divisional Headquarters in Bray is 01 6665300.

- If you hear of a problem area or route, write it up in MountainViews which does everyone a service. Report rubbish tipping in the Republic - ring EPA hotline 1850 365 121

- Report quads in national park area (in which they are banned). For Wicklow please phone the Duty Ranger: 087-9803899 or the office during office hours Telephone: +353-404-45800. Put these numbers in your phone, take regs etc. Let MV know of contact numbers for other areas.

- If you see a fire or someone doing something that could start a fire, report it. In NI phone 999, in the Republic 112 or Coillte: 1890 800 455.

- If you have climbed some of the less well known places, we would appreciate a summit rating and also GPS readings for summits.

- If we can, let’s make MV have more than one route up a summit so as to reduce the tendency for paths to appear. Your grid refs in place comments for different starting points show up on MountainViews maps.

Visit the MountainViews Facebook page: facebook.com/mountainviewsie/

THIS NEWSLETTER

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