

Northern Mountain Rescue Team

(formerly North West Mountain Rescue Team)

ANNUAL REPORT

2022-23

(period covering 1 Apr 2022 – 31 March 2023)



*International Multi-Agency Training
Cuilcagh Mountain Co Fermanagh January 2023*

Northern Ireland Charity No 100059

Name of Charity:

Northern Ireland Mountain Rescue Team (Formerly North West Mountain Rescue Team)

Registered Charity Number:

NIC 100059

Contact Details:

Public address: 62 Killee Road, Coa, Ballinamallard, Co. Fermanagh BT94 2FS

Telephone number: 079 1959 6487

Email: secretary@nwmrt.org

Website: www.nwmrt.org

Trustees 2022 -23:

Mr G. Stanbridge, Ms P. Ellis, Mr A. Kelly, Mr D. Cullinan, Mr R. Alexander, Mr G. McKelvey, Mr N. Mc Gillian, Mr S. Forrest, Mr K. Thompson.

Appointment of Trustees:

A trustee cannot be appointed by any person or body of persons within the charity but can only be appointed at any general meeting of the charity by majority vote and when a quorum is present

Governance:

The organisation is a charity unincorporated association governed by a constitution that was formally adopted at the most recent annual general meeting on 2 May 2018, and as amended on 11 August 2018 and 20 February 2022

Purposes:

1. To save life and prevent injury in remote, hostile, and mountainous environments.
2. To educate the public on hazards in mountains and offer practical advice to reduce risks.
3. To promote physical and mental health, fitness, and wellbeing of communities through outdoor activities, particularly in upland and mountainous areas.
4. To promote environmental protection, particularly in upland and mountainous areas.
5. To relieve the suffering of animals in remote, hostile, and mountainous environments.

Public Benefit Requirements:

The trustees have had regard to the public benefit requirement as defined in the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 (as amended).

SUMMARY OF EVENTS, ACTIVITIES AND MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

The team name issue unfortunately dominated the 2022-23 year following the decision by the team to change its name from North West Mountain Rescue Team to Northern Ireland Mountain Rescue Team at a Special General Meeting on 10 October 2021. The impact of this change was significant and detrimental both internally and externally to the team. This took up considerable officers' time in dealing with directly related issues, the most significant being the internal impact of continued divided member opinions which affected morale and created disruption to the running of the team.

The team name issue also resulted in two Serious Incident reports (5 August 2022 and 11 October 2022) lodged by the team to the Charity Commission. The matter remained unresolved by 31 March 2023.

Despite this challenge the team operations and training continued with the following main events:

Joint Team Training Scotland 22/23 October 2022

Following an invite from Moffat MRT, 10 team members travelled to Scotland to participate in a joint training exercise with Moffat MRT, Galloway MRT, Tweed Valley MRT, Tweed Valley MRT, Borders SARU, Police Scotland MRT (Strathclyde) and Scottish Ambulance Service. The training theme was based around winter rescue up to and including avalanche events. This event as well as providing excellent winter training was also a great opportunity to develop and build on new and existing partnerships.

Swift Water Training 29/30 October 2022, 19 February 2023

Following a successful grant application and team contribution £13,510 was invested in equipment and training, where 10 members were swift water trained to DEFRA Mod 2 (Responder - 6 members) and Mod 3 (Technician – 4 members). This training represented a significant development to the teams' capability to both assist and respond to water-based SAR activities. It has also extended the teams' capability to work in partnership with other water based SAR teams such as the RNLI and Coastguard particularly in and around the extensive Lough Erne catchment.

Inter Team Training 22 January 2023

This was the most ambitious team training event organised by the team in recent years. The exercise on Cuilcagh Mountain, Co Fermanagh, was based on a multi-agency effort in dealing with casualty care and extraction from the summit via the timber boardwalk. Over 40 team members were in attendance including representatives from Sligo Leitrim MRT, NI Ambulance Service (HART team), PSNI, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council. The training exercise was undertaken in difficult conditions and was a significant success in establishing and confirming methods of working should a real life event occur.

The exercise was also notable as it was apparently the first inter agency and cross border team working event in Northern Ireland.

The event was attended by the press and media and subsequently reported on in the local papers and on national TV.

Equipment and Vehicles

Following a successful grant application to DEARA, funding was secured for the purchase of two new vehicles namely a command vehicle and a two-seater jeep at a cost of £150,600. This grant also assisted the team in procuring new team PPE (jackets and leggings).

Fundraising and Recruitment

Fundraising for the year was down on the previous year, however 8 fundraising events including street collections and 5km runs were undertaken. We continued to apply for training and equipment grants with significant success from DEARA funding. The Department of Justice annual grant again proved vital in sustaining the essential finance to run the team.

7 new applicants completed the induction training to join the team in 2022/23. The team membership varied across the 2022-23 year however averaged in excess of 50 members at any one time.

Financial Position

A review of the charity's financial position at the end of the year is attached and was conducted by the independent examiner Martin Mc Guigan, 4 Drumlin Heights, Enniskillen, Co. Fermanagh, BT74 7NR. A copy of the Independent Examiners Report is at Annex A.

Fixed Asset Register

All equipment is allocated a life of three, six or nine years and straight-line depreciation applied using a monthly calculation to give an accurate value for all equipment held. Work continues in marking and registering all equipment electronically to improve accountability and replacement programmes. A copy of the Statement of Assets and Liabilities is at Annex A.

Incidents

The team was involved in 16 incidents in 2022-23.

The number of incidents decreased 44% from 29 to 16 from the previous reporting period and the total number of hours reduced by 69% from 1,345 to 414

A significant incident of note was a request to assist Sligo Leitrim MRT on 21 January 2022. This call -out was to assist with the technically difficult extraction of 3 casualties from the Benbulbin Mountain area (Dermott and Grainne's Cave). Four team members travelled to the scene to link up with Sligo Leitrim MRT to assist with the safe transfer of the casualties from very steep ground to awaiting ambulances. This was an example of

good inter-team working and the importance of being part of a larger body namely Mountain Rescue Ireland (MRI). It also fulfils a team objective to forge greater working partnerships with our sister SAR and MRTs when the need arises.

Training & Exercises

Total Training Hours (2017 -2023)

Year	Trg & Exs	Hours	Av Members
2022-23	108	5,392	26
2021-22	108	7,414	11
2020-21	52	1,688	8
2019-20	105	5,652	10
2018-19	102	4,542	17
2017-18	115	6,633	17

There were 108 Training Events in 22/23 with 5,392 total hours spend training.

Other Events

There were 160 events completed in year totalling 2,378 hours. Of these, 24 were public relations events where the team gave demonstrations to a range of groups including scouts and young farmers groups. This was a great opportunity to integrate with the local community, inform them of our role in the community and to educate them on safety in the outdoors.

Other events included meetings of working groups and committees, administration, equipment inspections, and grant applications.

Team Name Change

This report references the charity team name for the accounting period 2022-23 as Northern Ireland Mountain Rescue Team. It is important to note that the team name has subsequently been amended post this accounting period with reversion to the former name North West Mountain Rescue Team. This change was formally confirmed by the Charity Commission on 3rd November 2023.

Approved by trustees on 30 January 2024 and signed on their behalf by Stephen Forrest
Chair and Trustee



Stephen Forrest

Statement of Assets and Liabilities

	PPE	Office and IT equipment	Motor vehicles (Ops)	Motor vehicles (Support)	First aid	Ropes	Rigging hardware	Patient handling	Aerial support	Bases	Comms	Total
Cost or Valuation												
At 31/03/22	74,869	5,489	106,411	28,861	18,325	2,622	4,451	15,479	1,773	2,769	36,476	297,524
Additions	1,257	475	150,600	0	1,857		164	1,124	0	260	177	155,914
Disposals	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
At 31/03/23	76,125	5,964	257,011	28,861	20,182	2,622	4,615	16,603	1,773	3,029	36,653	453,438
Depreciation and Impairment												
At 31/03/22	22,842	3,217	56,519	485	12,197	1,968	3,399	5,167	1,714	1,272	16,911	125,691
Charged in year	11,595	1,164	31,969	0	3,867	254	366	1,812	59	328	4,980	117,206
Disposals	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Adjustment for revaluation/impairment	0	0	-7,845	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-7,845
At 31/03/23	34,437	4,381	80,643	485	16,065	2,222	3,765	6,978	1,773	1,601	21,891	174,240
Net Book Value												
At 31/03/22	52,027	2,272	49,893	28,376	6,127	654	1,052	10,312	59	1,497	19,565	171,834
At 31/03/23	41,688	1,582	176,368	28,376	4,117	400	850	9,625	0	1,429	14,763	279,198