



Art O'Neill Challenge 2022

Event Information

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Introduction

Dublin Wicklow Mountain Rescue Team (DWMRT) would like to welcome you to the 2022 Art O'Neill Challenge (AON). This document should give you all the information you need about the event. Please contact info@artoneill.ie if you have any questions that are not covered below.

AON is a fundraiser for DWMRT and is run by the team entirely for the benefit of the team. We are very grateful for your support, but we welcome, and reward, additional fundraising if you can manage it. We offer guaranteed entry into AON 2023 to the top 20 fundraisers participating in this year's event. If that's of interest to you, the easiest way to get sponsorship is using DWMRT's everydayhero page - <https://www.justgiving.com/dwmrt>. If you choose to fundraise, please email info@artoneill.ie and let us know.

We are delighted to have the support of the Great Outdoors and Helly Hansen. Great Outdoors have supported both AON and DWMRT for many years. They're very familiar with the event so call into the new shop on George's Street in Dublin city centre for any advice on purchases you need to make.

Finally, AON is a big event with lots of logistical challenges. DWMRT could not organise it without external help, so we'd also like to thank all of the volunteers who give up their night to help us out.

Safety Notes

Safety is a primary consideration for DWMRT. This is a challenging event and there are some considerations which should be noted by all participants.

1. All participants must be well lit and wearing high-vis reflective gear for the entire event, but most importantly during the road section. You must obey the rules of the road and cross at designated pedestrian crossings where available. Be Safe, Be Seen!
2. If you are unable or unwilling to continue, we will transport you to the finish line where you can collect your bag.
3. If you are unable or unwilling to continue, **you must tell us**. If you don't, we will start a search for you.
4. The event organisers reserve the right to end your participation in the event if they deem it is necessary for reasons of health and safety. You will be provided with transport to the finish line to collect your bag.



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5. The event organisers reserve the right to cancel or postpone the event, alter the route, or change other aspects of the event if required. This might occur in response to changing weather or Covid conditions which limit our ability to provide the high level of support that participants expect or in the event of a significant mountain rescue operation in the Wicklow area.
6. Non-event traffic is strongly discouraged from travelling on the event route to avoid interaction between vehicles and participants on narrow roads with poor visibility. There is no access or public parking at either checkpoint and very limited car parking at the finish line.
7. The emergency phone number for the event will be published at Dublin Castle. If appropriate or if for any reason you can't get through to the event emergency number, you can also ring 999/112 and ask for the emergency services.

Social Media

This event is an outstanding endeavour and an astonishing challenge for all participants. It is also a significant logistical challenge to run this event whilst meeting the highest standards of health and safety, participant experience and environmental impact mitigation.

We hope that social media, combined with live tracking, will add an extra dimension to the event and allow us to share the event with a wider audience. We encourage participants, volunteers and team members to share their experiences, stories and videos of the event using the hashtag #AON22 before, during, and after the event.



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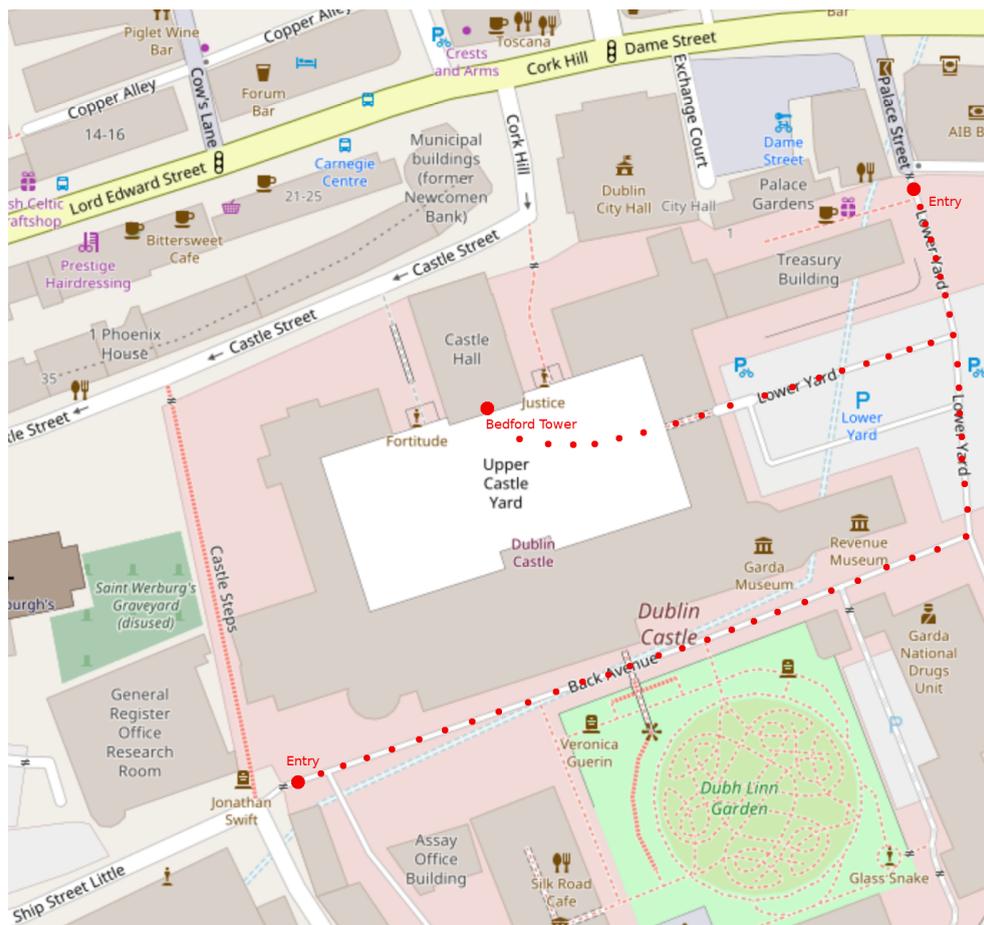


Getting to the Start

As usual, the event starts where it all began in 1592 - **Dublin Castle**. We will once again be using the Bedford Tower in the Upper Castle Yard for registration and gear check.

Please get a lift or use public transport to get to registration. There is no participant vehicle access or parking at the Castle - access is for event vehicles only.

Access to the Castle is via the Palace Street or Little Ship Street gates - please see the map. The routes to the Bedford Tower are marked in red.



Map © OpenStreetMap - <http://www.openstreetmap.org/copyright>

Imagery © 2017 Google

You can enter the Castle grounds from Dame Street via the Palace Street gate. Turn right once you pass the Treasury Building and go through the arch to access the Upper Yard. Bedford Tower is the building on your right as you enter the Upper Yard.

From Little Ship Street, make your way down Back Avenue. Turn left, and then left again, going through the Lower Yard before going through the arch to the Upper Yard and then Bedford Tower.



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Registration

Registration at Dublin Castle is from **20:00 to 23:00 Friday, January 21st**. The event will have a staggered start this year due to Covid-19 public health measures. Each participant will be contacted by email with a start time. The trek and hybrid categories will start between 20:00 and 21:30, and the ultra category will start between 21:30 and 23:00. Once you complete registration you will start the event straight away.

There are a few steps to work your way through, so please arrive at your allocated time. We'll do everything we can to keep you safe, but we need you to help us with that. Please note that masks must be worn at Dublin Castle, the checkpoints, and the finish.

Step 1 - Sign-in

The first stop in the Castle is sign-in to get your race number and bag tag. Your race number will look similar to the image below. You always need to keep this attached and visible during the event.



Step 2 - Event t-shirt

After you register and get your number, don't forget to pick up your event t-shirt.



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Step 3 - Event tracking

We are using a tracking system that will track the location of each participant again this year.

This has several advantages – it means we can see where everyone is at all times and it means family, friends and members of the public can track your progress through our publicly available website. The system will also provide timing and a trace of the route you take on the night. We'll send around the link to the tracking site closer to the event.

Please note that the trackers are very reliable, but can malfunction, lose reception, or be lost or damaged by participants. This may mean the participant can disappear from the online map or appear to be stopped for extended periods of time. Whilst this might be disconcerting for those following at home, please be reassured that our event base will be monitoring every participant closely and will deal with any issues that arise promptly. We have access to more information and have the resources to deal with any eventuality. Very often the tracker will come back into reception or will be reset remotely and the participant will "jump" a few kilometres up the route.



After registration you will receive your tracker which will be securely attached to your bag.

The tracker will be your responsibility from the moment it is given to you in Dublin Castle until you return it at the Finish Line. Lost trackers will incur a charge of €250.

If you are changing your backpack at CP1, it's your responsibility to securely transfer the tracker to your new pack, checkpoint staff can assist you with this.

Step 4 - Gear check

You should be dressed and ready to go at gear check. A limited supply of smaller, last-minute items may be available from the Great Outdoors mobile store at Dublin Castle but do not rely on this. This year, gear check will be contactless, but you will be required to demonstrate that you have all of the mandatory kit.

Mandatory gear will be checked and there will be no leniency. It is the responsibility of each participant to have the right gear.

The mandatory gear list for the entire event is as follows:

- Basic first aid kit (Minimum: 1 x dressing pad for heavy bleeding (field dressing, bandage and plasters)
- Head torch with battery power for 12 hours
- Energy food and drink
- High-vis vest
- Technical base layer (top and bottom merino wool recommended)
- Waterproof top (preferably with taped seams)
- Mobile phone fully charged and functional in a waterproof bag or pouch (e.g. Ziploc)

Mandatory gear for the mountain section, from Checkpoint 1 (CP1) onwards, is as follows:

- Survival bag & Foil blanket. A Blizzard Bag can be used instead of these two items.
- Maps of the route
- Compass (compulsory) & GPS (advisable)
- Whistle
- Gloves
- Fleece/wool hat
- Fleeces top/mid layer (two recommended)
- Waterproof bottoms
- Rucksack

Note on footwear: For trek and hybrid participants, we recommend having hiking boots available to change into at CP1. You'll be much more comfortable on the two hill sections. Your feet will get very cold in runners on the boggy open mountain. If you are running the event and are using runners, please make sure that you have tried and tested whatever combination of socks/waterproof socks/runners/gaiters you are going to use to ensure they work for you.

We allow the mandatory gear items needed for the mountain section to be packed in your drop-bag. This drop-bag will then be available for you at CP1 at the start of the mountain section and again at the finish.



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Step 5 - Baggage

Hand your drop-bag to a marshal to be taken directly to CP1. We advise you to pack the compulsory gear for the mountain section, extra water (1L), food, electrolytes, mountain footwear, spare clothes, and money in this bag for when you access it at CP1 and again at the Finish.

Laminated bag tags similar to the image below, which correspond with your bib number, are provided; they are also colour coded as per race category to make for easy bag finding at checkpoints.



Make sure your bag is obvious so it's easy to find at CP1 and the finish. Make sure to attach your bag tag. We strongly advise using waterproof liners or a waterproof bag as we cannot always guarantee the bags being covered due to other participants accessing their bags.

Starting times

Participants will start at intervals from 20:00 to 23:00. The trek and hybrid categories will start between 20:00 and 21:30, and the ultra category will start between 21:30 and 23:00.

You will be contacted by email with an allocated time. We will do what we can to group start times together, so that groups will start at the same time. Please arrive at your allocated time. You will start immediately after you complete the registration flow.

Route Details

The route is a approximately 60km long and is broken into three main sections:

1. The first section is a tough 30km, almost entirely on road. There is a checkpoint at Stone Cross – about 15km in – for safety. Wearing runners or more comfortable footwear is advisable for some people for this section. If you do, you'll need to pack suitable footwear for the mountain sections that follow.
2. The first mountain section is about 10km long, going from Checkpoint 1 (CP1) to Checkpoint 2 (CP2).
3. The final section, from CP2, past Art's Cross to the Finish at the Glenmalure Lodge, is circa another 20km and the most challenging of the three.

NB: Participants must pass within 300 metres of Art's Cross. This will be a mandatory, virtual checkpoint, enforced by GPS tracking.

Section 1: Dublin Castle to CP1 – 30km

- Please study the map for this section, which is almost entirely on road.
- Checkpoint Zero (CP0) at Stone Cross is a basic checkpoint for safety.
- Pace yourself – overdo it on the road and you won't even make CP1.
- In the interest of safety only EVENT cars are allowed along the route. Please note, the roads are not closed so keep an eye out for cars and use footpaths where available.

NB: You must wear a hi-vis vest at all times, stick to the footpaths and obey the rules of the road at junctions.

- Leave Dublin Castle via Cork Hill Gate onto Castle Street.
- Turn left onto Werburgh Street until the pedestrian crossing and traffic lights at Bull Alley Street. Turn right here followed by a left onto Patrick Street and continue straight on to Clanbrassil Street.
- Veer right at Harold's Cross, cross the road and bridge at Templeogue. Turn right at The Blue Haven Pub onto the R114.
- Stay straight passing over the M50 at the Firhouse Inn, past the Speaker Connolly and through Old Bawn where you leave town behind. Take extra care here as there is a short 3km section that does not have any public footpaths so make sure your lights and hi-vis are really visible.
- Through Bohernabreena, past the bad bridge and turn left at Stone Cross (see *below*). CP0 will be there. Please note, CP0 is for additional safety, and is very basic.



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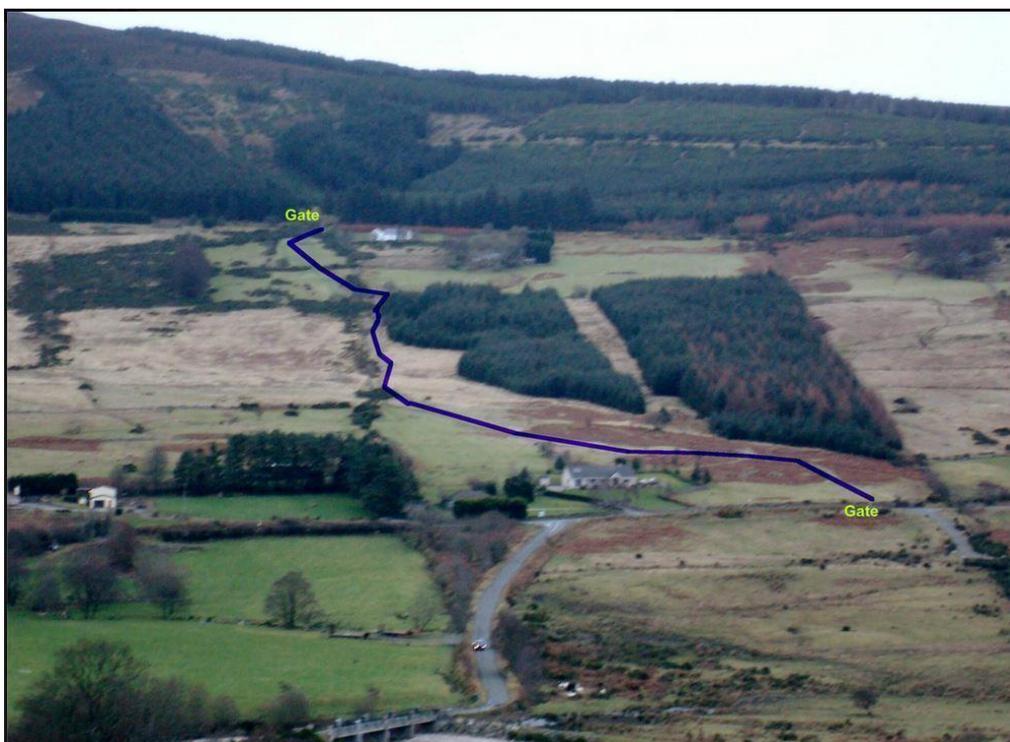




- After CP0 pass Kilbride Army Camp, and then keep an eye out for the Athdown shortcut. Keep an eye out for a wooden gate on the right hand side of the road. The gate is shown in the image below.



- The Athdown shortcut is a detour through private land at O068 154. **As it's private, it should not be checked in advance.** This section will be fully marked on the night. The image below shows the route through the Athdown shortcut.



- The route passes by private houses, as it will be very early morning, we kindly ask you to keep noise levels down and **keep all gates closed at all times**.
- This is the first off-road section and the steep grassy entry can be slippery so stay awake and watch your step. Hang in there and help each other – CP1 is really close now.
- From here, you're crossing Ballysmuttan Bridge and then heading south for CP1.

CP1: Ballynultagh Woods (O058 118)

- You will be directed to where your drop-bag will be waiting for you.
- You will then collect your food and coffee or tea. Water will also be available.
- There is a first aid post, should you need it
- **Return your bag to checkpoint staff** – so that it can be transported to the finish.
- CP1 has music, light, and company. Be warned though – do not spend too much time here as you will get cold and the finish is a long way off.
- We recommend you spend no more than 20 minutes at this checkpoint.
- **The cut-off time for CP1 is 6.5 hours after you start.** For example, if you leave the Castle at 22:00, you must reach CP1 before 04:30.
- There will be transport to the finish available for anyone not willing or able to continue.

If you are changing your clothing or gear, make sure that your tracker stays with you.



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Section 2: CP1 to CP2 – 10km

- The real navigation starts here. For conservation reasons we don't suggest any particular route. Navigation is part of the challenge!
- Your objective is to get yourself to the porridge at CP2, and there are a number of route options that you can choose when you leave CP1. Most people will stick to the eastern side of Glenbride valley after crossing Billy Byrne's Gap. In wet weather, it'll be easier and safer to choose the western side of Glenbride, as it avoids river crossings.
- Be responsible for your own navigation. Don't assume anyone else knows where they are going. Follow a bearing if you need to but not the headtorch in front!
- Know the route and be very careful of the rough ground and river crossings.
- Be especially vigilant for traffic when leaving Ballinagee Woods as you have to cross a main road to get to CP2. You do not have a right of way; watch for cars and obey marshals.

CP2: Oakwood Hostel (O035 018)

- CP2 is located at the Oakwood Hostel, at the grid reference above.
- Collect your food – porridge, coffee or tea, and water.
- First aid will be available if you need it, and transport to the finish will be available for anyone who is unable to continue.
- Please note, there will be no access to your drop-bag at this point.
- Resist the urge to stay too long in CP2. The toughest section is yet to come.
- **The cut-off time for CP2 is 10.5 hours.** For example, if you leave the Castle at 22:00, you must reach CP2 by 08:30.
- Even though AON is very limited on numbers we are still keen to limit any impact on the environment. The recommended route maximises use of forest tracks where possible as well as avoiding more sensitive areas more prone to erosion.

Section 3: CP2 at Oakwood to Glenmalure Lodge – 20km

- This is the toughest of the three legs, climbing past Art's Plaque and Cross.
- There are several route options available to reach Art's Cross but we recommend the right of Glenreemore Brook. The route on the left is mucky, more prone to erosion, and more slippery.
- This is the most challenging section for navigation. Know how to navigate, not just how to turn on a GPS. Art's Cross (*see below*) is a very important navigational marker.
- There is a mandatory, virtual checkpoint at Art's Cross. You must pass within 300 metres of Art's Cross. This will be enforced by GPS tracking.



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- **Note:** Art's Cross is not accurately marked on the OSI map. The correct grid reference for Art's Cross is **T03786 98936**.
- Again, after Art's Cross for conservation reasons we don't suggest any particular route to get to the finish
- Take your time with navigation. Choose your route, check your bearing twice and follow it once!
- Go east of Three Lakes and via Table Track to the ford at Baravore or maintain the high ground and go via the Wicklow Way at Lugduff Gap down to the finish at the Lodge (T1066 9084).
- **You've made it!**

Finish

- You must hand your tracker back to the staff at the finish line
- Your bag will be waiting for you and a marquee to change your clothes in the car park. Please make sure you have dry clothes to change into. Your bag should be waterproof.
- There will be tea, coffee and food waiting for you at the finish line.
- It's a good idea to have a little spare cash for some food and drink at the Glenmalure Lodge if you feel like it.

It is your responsibility to ensure that your transport home is prearranged and/or coordinated with your finish time either by viewing the live tracking or by calling your transport pickup directly.

Note: The Tracker web link will be shared in advance of the event start.



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Summary

- Safety is a priority. We reserve the right to take any actions deemed necessary to ensure a safe event for all.
- The emergency phone number for the event will be published at Dublin Castle, please save it in your phone when you get there.
- Registration is in Dublin Castle between 20:00 and 23:00
- Arrive at your allocated time
- Access to the Castle is through either Palace Street or Little Ship Street gates
- Only event vehicles will get access to the Castle
- Review the mandatory gear list and please have everything ready before going to the gear check
- Please note the emergency contact numbers that are posted in the Castle.
- Take care on the roads, wear your high-vis and pay attention
- All DWMRT events operate using 'leave no trace' principles – please respect your surroundings at all times. You can find out more on <http://www.leaveonotraceireland.org/seven-principles>
- You will be given a tracker in Dublin Castle and should hand it back at the finish line
- Make sure you coordinate your transport home.
- We're offering guaranteed entry into AON 2023 to the top 20 fundraisers participating in this year's event. If that's of interest to you, the easiest way to get sponsorship is using DWMRT's JustGiving page - <https://www.justgiving.com/dwmrt>. If you choose to fundraise, please email info@artoneill.ie and let us know.
- **Most importantly, enjoy it!**

We hope you enjoy the unique experience that is the Art O'Neill Challenge. We'd like to thank you for your interest in AON and your support. If you have any queries, please contact info@artoneill.ie.



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