

Membership price increase for 2023 in Klifurhúsið

The price table for 2023: <https://klifurhusid.is/upplysingar/price-table-2023>

The 1st of January 2023 the pricing in Klifurhúsið for memberships will increase beyond its normal scope. The reasons behind the increase are that the membership price has not kept up with the operational costs or salary costs that come with running a gym like Klifurhúsið in Iceland. This is evident when comparing membership plans with other Icelandic health clubs where the annual card for Klifurhúsið has been around half the price of other similar memberships. Salary costs for the gym have been increasing these past years, with the gym changing the way it calculates the hourly pay for part time employees (by facing out the so called “jafnaðarkaup” in the year 2022) and because of yearly unionized pay increases.

Other increasing operational costs for the gym are maintenance costs for the facility in Ármúli 23 (Á23) to insure that it meets the needs of its growing member base; with repair work, general maintenance (for example by buying a heating system and hiring a plumber to install it in the hall but most of the regular climbers in the gym have felt the lack of a proper heating system these past days) and better equipment. In the past work such work has been done in big parts by volunteers but with the increasing size of the community and the added workload to keep up the maintenance it is no longer possible to operate that way. The volunteer work also often lands on the shoulders of the same set of people and runs them down in the end. Another reason is because some of the projects that need to be done include a lot of work and it cannot be expected for volunteers to take on such a big responsibility and to be honest since the gym moved to Á23 ten years ago it has depleted the energy of many of its most loyal volunteers, and it has been coming clearer these past years that it cannot run by that model for much longer.

Some changes will be made next year regarding the services and operational directions in the gym, both to enhance the quality for the members and the work environment. The work for many of these changes has already begun and includes for example that the annual membership in Klifurhúsið will not only be for the gym in Á23, but also for the new climbing hall in Ármúli 23 (Á23, that is being built right at this moment) and the lead climbing wall in Miðgarður (which annual card will otherwise cost 41.000 kr.). The biggest shipment of climbing holds that Iceland has ever seen is also coming in January/February, the holds are of a high quality and will come in good use for the gym and its members. The arrival of these

holds couldn't come at a better time as it coincides closely with the opening of the facility in Á21 and with the opening of this second bouldering hall the opportunities for bouldering in the capital area will revolutionize. A big chunk of the organized club activity in Klifurhúsið will be moved to Á21. The new facility will be split into a bouldering hall, a kid's climbing hall and in the basement will be rooms for activities such as warmups, yoga, primal, stretches and more. Climbers with experience who are climbing around V4 and up will find routes for themselves in Á21 and as a result there will be more space for the so-called commercial route-setting in Á23 with more beginner and casual friendly routes.

Another change worth mentioning is the route-setting. For the past two years the gym has worked purposefully towards creating and training a 4–5-person route-setting team that works in an organized manner in the climbing hall and is responsible for ensuring that the different needs of the broad and ever-expanding group of climbers in Klifurhúsið. A lot of ambition goes into the route-setting and for example for the past six months over 600 routes have been set up and taken down in Á23 and according to the document used to oversee the routes in the gym there are at any given time around 120 to 150 routes on the walls. It is the responsibility of the route-setting team to oversee the number of routes on the walls and account for how many routes there are for each difficulty level. This team works together on two specific days a week in taking down the holds, washing them and putting up new routes to make sure that there are always new and demanding projects on the walls. This system of route-setting is used specifically to meet the needs of the different groups of climbers in the gym and is what is being used these days in the more advanced gyms internationally. This organization and framework around route-setting is in itself a big change for Klifurhúsið and for example only four years ago it would rather be the exception than the rule if new routes were put up during the summer season or from May to August. At that time the need for route-setting in the summer wasn't considered that important as the greater part of climbers in Iceland would mostly climb indoors over the winter to prepare to go outside to climb in the summer. Since then, the group of climbers who solely (or mostly) climb indoors has been grown quite a lot and is a good example of how the climbing community has been changing and developing, both in Iceland and internationally. We're very proud of all the work that has been done and the success in developing a route-setting team and system around it in Klifurhúsið and are very much looking forward to developing it further, as the route-setting is one of the absolutely most important aspects of a climbing gym.

To understand why the club is at this turning point it's important to have a grasp of its foundation by looking back at when it was founded (the) 13th of February 2002 by a small group of climbers who wanted to build a facility to train over the winter months to prepare for the summer season. How the

club's foundation was built solely by volunteers has followed it ever since, but today around 25 staff members work for the club and its members are 1504. So, in these 20 years Klifurhúsið has grown from being a much smaller gym that was at first only open when someone with a key came around and unlocked the door into a much larger sports club and bouldering gym that is open the year round from 9/10am to 20/22pm. The evolution the gym has gone through in these years hasn't come without growing pains and certain changes have had to be made: such as the increase of employees, more organization in route-setting and required experience for route-setter, and changes in the facilities to meet the demands of the ever-growing member base. Overall, it's very positive to see how much the climbing community in Klifurhúsið has grown and developed over these 20 years and we hope that with the addition of the lead climbing wall in Miðgarður and the new bouldering hall in Á21 will give us an even better opportunity to grow and prosper. Another hope that we hold dear is that the plans for Toppstöðin in Elliðaárdalur will succeed and that Klifurhúsið will be able to move in the next 4-5 years to a 2000 square feet centre for climbing in the capital area.

To conclude we just want to mention that the reason for this letter is that we who work for the club that owns and operates Klifurhúsið, either as board members or employees, think that you who are a part of the climbing community in Klifurhúsið deserve an explanation on the reasons behind this pay increase. We also understand that it changes the operational policy that has been dominant in Klifurhúsið before now, so, we want to offer those who have a subscription in Klifurhúsið that they can cancel it if this change does not work for them, even if the required minimum of the subscription has yet to pass and members will have until the 31st of January 2023 to decide and send an email requesting the cancellation to klifurhusid@klifurhusid.is. (Please note that the one person who handles sign ups and cancellations in the gym will be on holiday from the 26th of December to the 8th of January so cancellations that arrive in that time will be completed after the 8th but will be valid from the day the request was sent).

We thank you for the reading and hope you understand why these changes in operational policy had to be made to accommodate the changes that the club and community has experienced since it was founded. Also, we thank you for this past year and are very excited for the next climbing year!

Klifurhúsið – A friendly place in a harsh world!

The board and staff of Klifurhúsið

Reykjavík, 19th of December 2022