

= Edinburgh International Climbing Arena =

Edinburgh International Climbing Arena (EICA : Ratho , formerly the Ratho Adventure Centre) is an adventure sports facility located in Ratho , near Edinburgh , Scotland . Built in a disused quarry , it is the largest indoor climbing wall in the world .

Financial problems months after it opened in December 2003 put the Arena into receivership . It was purchased by the City of Edinburgh Council and fully reopened in May 2007 after a further programme of works costing around GB £ 6 million . The centre is now used by both recreational climbers and for competitions , and is also home to the Scottish National Judo Academy .

= = History = =

Originally used for supplying stone to the Central Belt of Scotland due to its proximity to the Union Canal , the quarry expanded from around a third of its present size in 1853 to the current outline in 1895 . Edinburgh climbers Rab Anderson , Duncan McCallum and architect David Taylor formed the Ratho Quarry Company , and purchased the quarry in 1995 as the site for the climbing centre . The quarry , which had been unused for around ninety years , was filled with compacted rubble and heavily overgrown with trees and shrubs , making assessment of the site difficult until significant work had been carried out , but the assumption that the floor of the quarry was flat proved to be correct . Plans unveiled in late 2001 showed the estimated cost to be GB £ 7 million , with funding of GB £ 1 @. @ 5 million to come from a Sportscotland lottery fund grant .

The climbing centre is located in the smaller of two lobes of a figure of eight that make up the quarry . After 250 @, @ 000 tonnes (250 @, @ 000 long tons ; 280 @, @ 000 short tons) of rubble was removed , the quarry was shown to have a broadly level floor and be almost 30 metres (98 ft) deep . During construction in April 2002 , the partially completed roof was ripped off in a storm .

When it opened in December 2003 , the centre was the largest indoor climbing arena in the world , but problems during construction increased the final cost to GB £ 22 million . In March 2004 the centre went into receivership due to a leaky roof , poor management , and a lack of money , leaving a number of contractors unpaid . It was purchased by the City of Edinburgh Council in October 2005 for GB £ 3 @. @ 87 million , and then closed in August 2006 to allow full completion of the venue .

It reopened on 25 May 2007 , under the management of Edinburgh Leisure , a non @-@ profit organisation which provides sport and leisure facilities on behalf of the City of Edinburgh Council . GB £ 6 million was spent overhauling the roof , the plumbing , improving the car park and converting an unopened scuba diving tank into a dedicated bouldering room . Under new management , more emphasis was placed on making the centre accessible to families and visitors as well as experienced climbers . The roof , consisting of 8 @, @ 500 square metres (91 @, @ 000 sq ft) of tensioned fabric , was replaced at the end of 2013 at a cost of around GB £ 500 @, @ 000 .

= = Climbing = =

There are over 11 @, @ 000 bolt @-@ on holds in the centre , with 300 routes ranging in difficulty from grades 2 to 8b . The Aerial Assault course is an assault course suspended 30 metres (98 ft) above the main hall , which takes around 30 minutes and is open to anybody over 1 @. @ 4 metres (4 ft 7 in) tall . As well as a trio of boulders in the centre of the main hall , there is a dedicated bouldering room , with routes ranging in difficulty from V0 to V15 .

Two identical speed walls allow speed climbing competitions to be conducted head to head , and there is an articulated competition wall known as " The Hanger " that can be raised or lowered to change the angle of overhang .

The larger " lobe " of the quarry is also used for outdoor climbing , although some of the rock is described as " loose and scary " . Formed from dolerite , there are around 65 known routes .

= = Services and facilities = =

The centre contains the world 's largest indoor climbing arena , as well as bouldering facilities , the Scottish National Judo Academy , and an aerial assault course .

Within the centre there is a Tiso outdoor shop and a HoneyPot Ceramics studio , as well as a cafe overlooking the main arena . The centre has a gym that is available when not in use by Scottish National Judo Academy . Other classes are held in the Fitness Studio .

= = Events = =

= = = Competitions = = =

The centre hosted the UIAA @-@ ICC Boulder & Lead World Cup in December 2003 .

The centre also hosted the IFSC World Youth Championship in 2004 and 2010 , and the British Lead Climbing Championships every year until Awesome Walls in Sheffield took over in 2013 .

= = = Theatre = = =

In the Edinburgh International Festival 2013 , Leaving Planet Earth used the centre as the stage .

= = = Politics = = =

On 20 April 2015 the Scottish National Party held their manifesto launch for the 2015 general election in the main climbing arena .