



walking & cycling in craigavon



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Walking and cycling enthusiasts are finding that Craigavon encapsulates the phrase "the freedom of the road".

As we become increasingly hemmed in by traffic congestion, travel restrictions and urban development, Craigavon's walking and cycling trails present a superb opportunity to enjoy fresh air and healthy exercise, amid some of Northern Ireland's most stunning scenery.

The routes shown in this guide include loughside trails, old coaching roads, canal towpaths and the National Cycle Network.

This booklet takes you on a journey along 11 of the main walking and cycling routes in the area. Remember, once there, set your own pace and enjoy yourself.

CODES OF USE

Follow country Code.
Be courteous to other users.
Respect the environment
Wear suitable footwear and clothing.

If you wish to find out more about these routes or countryside access or have any suggestions, please contact:

Countryside Access Officer
Craigavon Borough Council
Lough Neagh Discovery Centre
Oxford Island
Craigavon
Co Armagh
BT66 6NJ
(028) 3832 2205



Terrain Rating: 1 (easy) - 4 (challenging)



craigavon cycle trail



This easy-going cycle trail passes through a landscape of waterways and picturesque old coaching roads, with over a third of the way on traffic-free paths. Heading west from the Lough Neagh Discovery Centre and Café you are on Route 9 and 94 of the National Cycle Network, passing the Craigavon Lakes, Tannaghmore Animal Farm and the Craigavon Watersports Centre. At Portadown the trail joins the Newry Canal Towpath.

The Point of Whitecoat is where three waterways meet and the Newry Canal begins - the first inland canal in the British Isles. Look out for swans and, if you're lucky, the flash of a kingfisher. Follow the canal towpath to Money Penny's Lock where there is an exhibition in the restored Lightermen's Bothy and Stables.

From Knock Bridge you are following Regional Route 10 to the Bluestone Road, the old Lurgan to Newry coaching road, passing Lisnaminty Rath, some traditional mud-walled cottages, the Red Cow Coaching Inn and the 17th Century Lynastown Quaker burial ground. The route heads on to Bleary and The Ballydougan Pottery, Waringstown and then the Lagan Canal Towpath near Aghagallon before returning to the Lough Neagh Discovery Centre.



Terrain Rating (1-2)

Traffic-free paths for 19.3km/12 miles, and minor roads with light traffic.

Can be busy in Portadown on Bridge Street.

Total 56km/35 miles

Route map available.

OSNI 1:50 000, sheet 20 Discoverer Series



wetlands way - the birches and maghera trails



These trails embrace the south-western shore of Lough Neagh and take in a rural area rich in wildlife and natural habitats. There are also a number of interesting local heritage sites such as O'Connor's stronghold, Coney Island, Rathbanna Metal Craftworks, Milltown Rectory, and the disused ferry crossing at the Bannfoot.

Blue Route 8km/5 miles – quiet roads, links Maghera Country Park and Peatlands Park, River Blackwater and Lough Neagh.

Orange Route 8.85km/5.5 miles – quiet roads, River Bann and Lough Neagh.

Black Route 19.3km/12 miles – quiet roads, links Maghera Country Park and Peatlands Park, River Blackwater, River Bann and Lough Neagh (Peatlands/Derryadd loop extra 5.6km/3.5 miles)

Terrain rating (2)

Three trails covering a total distance of 36.2km/22.5 miles. 90% on minor roads

Circular routes suitable for cycling, walking and horse riding.

Starting Points: Maghera Country Park, Maghera, Co. Armagh. Peatlands Park, Derryhubbert Road, Dungannon.
Or anywhere on the routes.

OSNI 1:50,000 Sheet 19 & 20 Discoverer Series.



Wetlands Way - The Birches and Maghera Trails

wetlands way - the bann montaighs trail



The land to the east of the River Bann is known as the Bann Montaighs, the latter being the Gaelic word for bogland. It comprises numerous quiet country roads which will take the traveller into the rural heart of this region giving the opportunity for contemplation and enjoyment of this delightful rural area. Some points of interest along the way include Derryinver Moss, Emerson's Sand Quay and Harbour, Derryadd Bog, Oxford Island National Nature Reserve, Lough Neagh Discovery Centre, Lough Gullion and Derrytrasna Moss.



Green Route 8km/5 miles — quiet roads and off-road rampart, River Bann and Lough Neagh



Red Route 10.4km/6.5 miles — quiet roads and off-road rampart, links Lough Neagh and Lough Gullion.



Purple Route 20.9km/13 miles — quiet roads, River Bann and Lough Neagh



Terrain rating (2)

Circular routes suitable for cycling, walking and horse riding. Starting Points: Oxford Island, Lough Neagh Discovery Centre, Emersons Harbour, and Bannfoot.

Three trails covering a total distance of 39.4km/24.5 miles. 90% on minor roads

OSNI 1:50,000 Sheet 19 & 20 Discoverer Series.



Wetlands Way

national cycle network route 9 and 91



The National Cycle Network Route 9 runs for 25km / 16miles through Craigavon on its way from Belfast to Newry. It enters the Borough of Craigavon at the Broadwater on the Lagan Canal near Soldierstown, Moira and runs on minor roads to Oxford Island National Nature Reserve, on the shores of Lough Neagh. Here, the Lough Neagh Discovery Centre provides the visitor with an interpretation of the ecosystem and heritage of the Lough, and has a charming restaurant.

From Oxford Island the cyclist follows a minor road for a mile and then joins traffic-free paths through the City Park via Tannaghmore Animal Farm and Gardens, past Craigavon Lakes and Craigavon Watersports Centre and onwards to Portadown where the cyclist joins the Boulevard alongside the River Bann.

The cyclist is once again free from the traffic and can cycle from Portadown to Newry on the Newry Canal Way. The Newry Canal was the first summit level canal in the British Isles. Along the towpath, the cyclist is likely to see swans and a host of other wildlife. Money Penny's Lock is the last lock on the canal and there is an exhibition of canal life in the restored lightermen's bothy and stables. At Knock Bridge on the Mullahead Road, the National Cycle Network splits, Route 9 proceeds to Newry and Route 91 heads to Armagh and Ballyshannon.

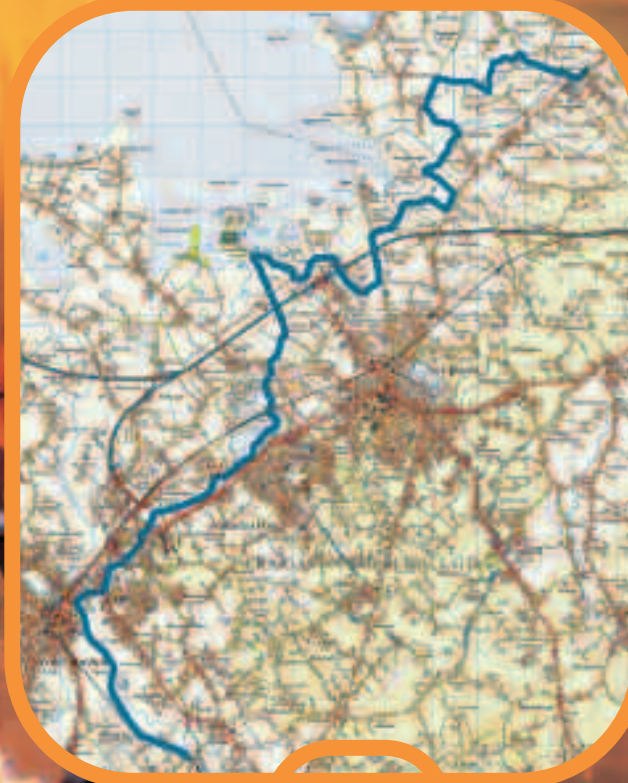
Terrain Rating (2)

Linear route mostly on traffic-free paths suitable for cycling, walking and disabled users, the rest is on quiet minor roads. Starting Points: Moira Railway Station, Oxford Island, Portadown or Knock Bridge on the Mullahead Rd, Portadown. 70% on traffic-free paths

25km/16miles

Route map available.

OSNI Map 1:50,000 Sheet 20 Discoverer Series.



national cycle network

newry canal waymarked way



The Newry Canal Way runs for 32km /20miles from Portadown Town Centre to Newry. The Route is also part of the Ulster Way. One of a series of Waymarked Ways traversing some of Northern Ireland's most beautiful countryside.

Newry Canal was Britain's first summit level canal but today the old towpath has left the working barges of the 18th and 19th Centuries behind to lead you through a wealth of historical milestones, engineering genius and extreme natural beauty.

The route begins on the Bann Boulevard at Shillington's Quay and at Portadown Rowing Club leaves the town behind and follows the Poplar lined Boulevard alongside the River Bann to the Point of Whitecoat. Three waterways meet here, the Bann, the River Cusher and the Newry Canal. A tubular bridge spans the River Cusher and takes the traveller onto the Newry Canal Towpath.

Moneypenny's Lock, the fourteenth and last on the canal, takes its name from the Moneypenny family who were the lock keepers for eighty-five years and there is an exhibition of canal life in the restored lightermen's bothy and stables. At Knock Bridge on the Mullahead Road, the Newry Canal Way continues for a further 17 miles to Newry.



Terrain Rating (1)

Linear route - Starting Points within Craigavon: Portadown Centre, or Knock Bridge on the Mullahead Rd, Portadown.
90% on canal towpath, 10% on quiet minor roads

32km/20miles

Route map available.

OSNI 1:50,000 Sheet 20 and 29 Discoverer Series.





Oxford Island National Nature Reserve is situated on the shores of Lough Neagh, the largest freshwater lake in the British Isles. It is a haven for wildlife and the visitor can explore a range of habitats from woodlands to reedbeds, following trails covering 4 miles in total. Most are suitable for wheelchair use and there are motorised disabled scooters available. There is also a children's play area and paddling pool and picnic areas.

The Lough Neagh Discovery Centre opened in 1993 and has recently been refurbished. The café, specialising in home cooking, now boasts a comfortable seating area upstairs and a new extensive range of menus, offering customers a much wider choice.

The trails take in Kinnego Marina, also situated at Oxford Island. From here the visitor can enjoy boat trips along the secluded bays and small islands off the Lough Shore, including Coney Island. The marina has been refurbished with new mooring berths and a new building including a café. There is a caravan and campsite.



Terrain Rating (1)

Circular trails through the National Nature Reserve. Some steps and stiles. Suitable for walking, and in places cycling and disabled access. Starting Points: Lough Neagh Discovery Centre or Kinnego Marina.

Incorporates the National Cycle Network Route 9 and 94.

70% on traffic free paths.

6.5km/4miles

OSNI 1:50,000 Sheet 20 Discoverer Series

OXFORD
ISLAND



CRAIGAVON
Borough Council





An extensive network of walking and cycling paths are set within 250 acres of parkland around the Craigavon Lakes and are suitable for disabled users and families. National Cycle Network Route 9 and 94 utilise the site. The parkland also incorporates the Craigavon Mountain Bike Trail. This 10km trail meanders through the woods and meadows and is suitable for families with children competent at cycling, and is also challenging enough for more experienced riders. A separate section in this publication covers the Mountain Bike trail.

At the lakeside is the Craigavon Watersports Centre - the foremost facility of its kind in Northern Ireland. Expert instruction is offered in a wide range of water sports, cycling, climbing and team building games in a safe environment. There is bike hire available including mountain bikes and touring cycles. These can be hired individually or as a guided tour.

Tannaghmore Animal Farm and Gardens cover a total of 100 acres and have fine examples of rare breeds of livestock and poultry. The Barn Museum exhibits traditional farm techniques such as haymaking and blacksmithing.

The parkland incorporates a range of habitats and is host to skylarks, grasshopper warblers and a variety of wildfowl. Of particular note is the wildflower corridor either side of the NI railway line, abundant in June and July. This area is rich in biodiversity and hosts a significant population of Orchids including Bee Orchids - a key indicator of biodiversity. The pathways run alongside these areas.

Terrain Rating (1)

Starting Points: Craigavon Centre, Brownlow, Craigavon Watersports Centre and Tannaghmore Animal Farm & Gardens.

OSNI 1:50,000 Sheet 20 Discoverer Series.



craigavon mountain bike trail



The first purpose built mountain bike trail in Northern Ireland is situated within 250 acres of parkland around the Craigavon Lakes. This 10km trail meanders through mature and juvenile broadleaf woodlands, wildflower meadows and along lake shoreline. It is suitable for families with children competent at cycling and is also challenging enough for more experienced riders. The trail utilises the landscape contours and the natural habitat around the park to create a challenging and also scenic riding experience.

The Craigavon Watersports Centre provides the natural base for cyclists using the Craigavon Mountain Bike Trail. Mountain bikes are available for hire and groups can also book for a guided tour of the trail. Tannaghmore Animal Farm and Gardens is also on the route.



Terrain Rating (2-4)

National Cycle Network Route 9 and 94 (The Loughshore Trail) provide access to the site.

A website and route map are available.





This is a very attractive and gentle trail following the line of the old Lagan Canal Towpath. The path is smooth and flat and is ideal for disabled users, walkers and cyclists.

This section of the Lagan Canal was opened in 1794. The bridges are a work of art and you can still see the marks in the stone of the barge ropes. The horse-drawn barges of the Lagan Canal once played a vital role in the transport system of the country, carrying tons of merchandise between Belfast and Lough Neagh ports.

From the canal it is but a short distance to the Montiagh Moss Area of Special Scientific Interest, an important peat habitat, where traditional life still involves fishing on the Lough and willow basket making. Within this area are Gawleys Gate visitors harbour and Portmore Lough RSPB Reserve.

National Cycle Network Route 9 and 94 (The Loughshore Trail), and the Craigavon Cycle Trail utilise the towpath.

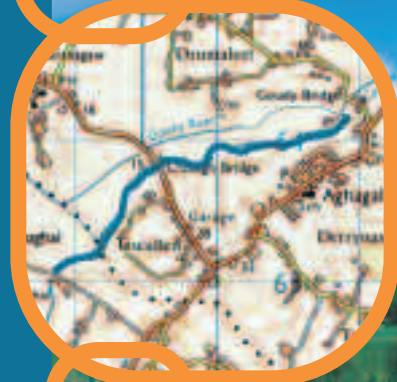


Terrain Rating (1)

Canal towpath. Shared use including walking, cycling and horseriding. Pedestrian/cycle way and separate bridleway. Horseriders must use the bridleway. Linear Route. Starting Points: Cranagh Bridge and Annaghdroghal Bridge, Aghagallon.

2.4km/1.5 mile

OSNI 1:50,000 Sheet 20 Discoverer Series



The Loughshore Trail forms Route 94 of the National Cycle Network and circumnavigates Lough Neagh, the largest freshwater lake in the British Isles. A relatively flat route, it is ideal for a short break or a cycling holiday suitable for both cycling enthusiasts and families alike. The attractive and well-signposted route makes for a healthy, environmentally friendly alternative to holidays by car.

You can now sample the beauty and diverse natural and built heritage of this largely undiscovered region for yourself. One of the Lough's most significant characteristics is its tranquility and attractive shoreline and the trail meanders on quiet minor roads and some traffic-free paths providing access to this unique area.

In Craigavon, the Loughshore Trail runs for approximately 30 miles/48km taking in Montiagh Moss Area of Special Scientific Interest, the Lagan Canal, Oxford Island National Nature Reserve, Lough Neagh Discovery Centre, Kinnego Marina, Craigavon Lakes, Tannaghmore Animal Farm and Gardens, Craigavon Watersports Centre, the South Lough Neagh Wetlands, Maghera Country Park and the River Bann and River Blackwater.

Terrain Rating (1-2)

180km/110mile cycle trail around Lough Neagh and Lough Beg. 95% on minor roads. (Approximately 48km/30miles through Craigavon, 35% on traffic free paths). Circular route.

Also available is the Loughshore Trail National Cycle Network Route 94 Map, the 'Loughshore Trail - Cycling the Lough Neagh Region' brochure and an Accommodation Guide for the trail.

OSNI 1:50,000 Sheets 14, 19 & 20 Discoverer Series.





Trails on ramparts through an extensive low lying peatland region, 3 miles south of Portadown which gives full expression to 200 years of peat extraction, resulting in an intricate pattern of pools, banks and ramparts. The range of habitats provided by cutting to the old fen layer, and the acid peats of later deposition, provides contrasts in habitats not repeated elsewhere. Such diversity lead to the establishment of a National Nature Reserve. There are numerous species of birds, dragonfly and butterfly to be seen in the Reserve, as well as beetles and moths.

Not far from here is the Newry Canal Way that runs for 20 miles on the old towpath that stretches from Portadown to Newry.



Terrain Rating (1)

Short trails on peat ramparts through National Nature Reserve. 100% on traffic-free paths. Circular trails through the National Nature Reserve. Suitable for walking. Starting Points: Entrance to the Nature Reserve, Brackagh Moss Road, Portadown.

Up to 4.8km/3 miles

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TOURISM

Lough Neagh Discovery Centre, Oxford Island, Annaloiste Road, Lurgan
(028) 3832 2205.

Millennium Court Arts Centre, Millennium Court, William Street, Portadown
(028) 3839 4415.

Town Centre Managers Office, High Street, Lurgan
(028) 3834 9149.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Translink
(028) 9066 6630
www.translink.co.uk

Portadown Train Station
(028) 3835 1422.

Lurgan Train Station
(028) 3832 2052.

CYCLING

Sustrans
(028) 9043 4569.
www.nationalcyclenetwork.org.uk.

Craigavon Borough Council
(028) 3832 2205
www.craigavon.gov.uk

Cycling Ulster
07816751471
www.cyclingulster.com

Cycle Northern Ireland
www.cycleni.com

Off-road cycling
www.countrysidecreation.com.

CYCLE HIRE

Craigavon Watersports Centre, Craigavon
(028) 3834 2669

CYCLE SHOPS

Central Cycles, 4 Church Lane, Portadown
(028) 3833 3668

The Cyclery, 74 Edward Street, Lurgan
(028) 3834 8627

Dynes T W, 23 William Street, Lurgan
(028) 3832 6863

Halfords, Marlborough Retail Park, Craigavon
(028) 3833 7624

JJB Sports, Rushmere Shopping Centre, Central Way, Craigavon
(028) 3834 5987

McCabrey T J, 70 William Street, Lurgan
(028) 3832 5720

Raymond R, 65 Bridge Street, Portadown
(028) 3835 2828

