

# Dromara Walks starting at Drumkeeragh Forest

## Darby's Loanin & Glen Loanin



### Introduction

A trip through lanes in the Mourne Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in the countryside between Dromara and Ballynahinch. This walk of around 5 miles follows 2 public rights of way and roads in the rolling Dromara Hills. A walk for clear weather when the views can be enjoyed.

### How to get there

From Banbridge From Dromore Road join A1 in direction of Belfast and take first turn-off on R signed for Dromara. Where road forks take Waringsford Road to L. Follow signs to Dromara passing through small village of Kinallen. In Dromara, at junction turn R into village onto B7 towards Rathfriland. Take the second road on the L (from junction) the Castlewellan Road (outside village). Travel along this road for approximately 3.5 miles to Drumkeeragh Forest on the left. Turn in and park in car park or at lay-by on left before forest entrance.



### Points of interest

The walk offers good views of Slieve Croob mountain, known locally as 'The Twelve Cairns' as a massive Bronze Age cairn once graced the summit (little now remains). The mountain is the source of the River Lagan which flows from here to the sea at Belfast.

### Tourist Information

Drumkeeragh is a mixed conifer forest managed by Forest Service. It is located on the s.w. slopes of Slieve Croob 7 miles south west of Ballynahinch and offers extensive views of County Down. There are a number of walking trails in the forest ranging from 0.5 miles to 3.5 miles. Forest Service have produced a trail guide available from [www.foreserviceseni.gov.uk](http://www.foreserviceseni.gov.uk) – publications. Down District Council have public rights of way asserted near the Slieve Croob Inn.

The impressive Legananny Dolmen is located about 5 miles from Drumkeeragh Forest, as is another interesting historic site, Finnis Souterrain/Binder's Cove, which is an underground passage (lit by solar lighting). From forest take R and travel downhill to x roads. At x roads take L into Drin Rd. At end of Rd take R – drive over bridge and turn L into B7, take next L, Carrigagh Rd and follow signs for Dolmen. To visit souterrain retrace steps to junction of Carrigagh Rd and Legananny Rd – turn L into Carrigagh Rd and look out for signpost and a small lay-by about 0.5 mile along this road.

## FACT FILE

### Distances:

Approximately 5 miles.

**Grade:** Moderate.

### Advice:

Tracks may be very muddy in wet weather – boots required. Uneven surface. Gates. Finnis Souterrain/Binder's Cove is prone to winter flooding and may be closed during this time. For info ring 028 4066 0617.

### Start and Finish:

Drumkeeragh Forest.

### Parking:

Drumkeeragh Forest Car Park.

### Grid Ref:

J330460 OS Discoverer Series  
1:50000 Sheet 20 Slieve Croob  
Outdoor Pursuits Map.

### Terrain:

Mixture of public rights of way and road.

### Accommodation:

B&B accommodation and Slieve Croob Inn nearby, also self-catering cottages at Seeconnell, near Slieve Croob and one near public rights of way above. Contact Banbridge Tourist Information Centre on 028 4062 3322.

### Refreshments:

Several pubs and restaurants and fast food outlets are located in Dromara which is approx. 3.5 miles from the forest. An alternative is the Slieve Croob Inn set in the hills (approx. 3.5 miles) – turn L from Forest entrance along Drumnaquoile Road take first road on R, Slievenisky Road continue along ignoring road on L (Ballywillwill Road) at junction of Slievenisky Road and Clonvaraghan Road turn R and after a short distance you will see the Slieve Croob Inn on R. There is also a pub in Finns – advisable to check opening times (approx. same distance to NW of Forest).

# Dromara Walks starting at Drumkeeragh Forest

## Darby's Loanin & Glen Loanin



To begin walk turn R from the entrance of Drumkeeragh Forest and follow Castlewella Road for 2 miles. Pass the Gaelic football pitch and look for signpost on the right marked 'Bridleway'.

Turn into this lane known as 'Darby's Loanin' which is a public right of way and follow lane through farmyard until you eventually meet the Moneynabane



Road. From this lane there are wonderful views of Slieve Croob.

In season, the brilliant yellow of the gorse or whins provides a beautiful display. In the past, whins were used for roofing, making brushes and dyes.

At the end of Darby's Loanin turn L and continue along Moneynabane Road for approximately 0.5 mile. Take second lane on R 'Glen Loanin', another public right of way, which is signposted as a bridleway. Follow this pathway to meet the Drumboy Road and turn R walking towards Slieve Croob. Continue to the T-junction and turn left to continue back to Drumkeeragh Forest.



### Alternative:

For a shorter walk park with due care and consideration (without blocking the gates), outside the Gaelic football ground off the Castlewella Road. From the entrance turn R and walk down the road to the bridleway sign on R and follow directions as above but at T-junction turn R to walk down the Castlewella Road to return to starting point.

