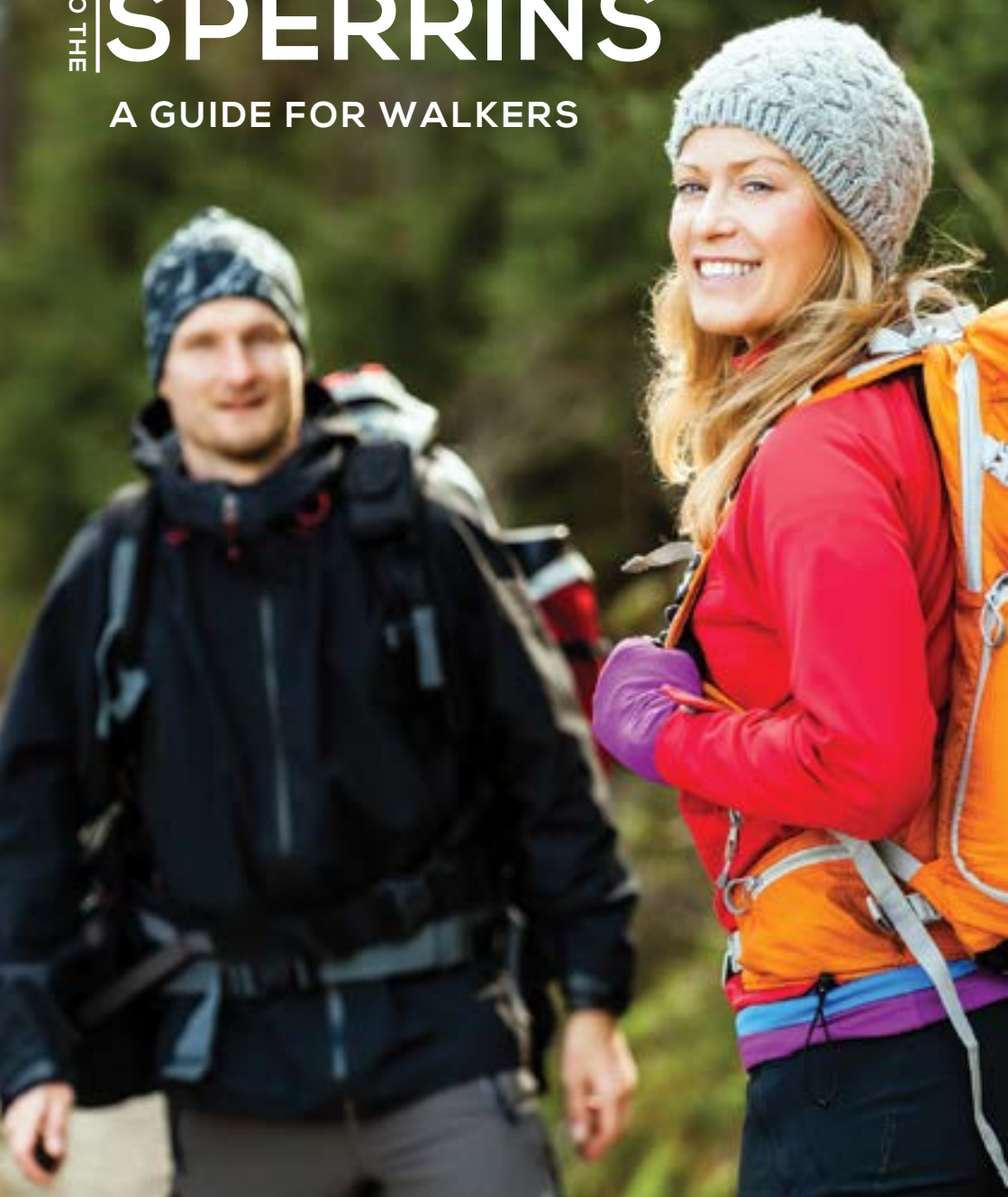


# GATEWAY TO THE SPERRINS

A GUIDE FOR WALKERS







# GATEWAY TO THE SPERRINS

MOYDAMLAGHT FOREST

MONEYNEENA

DERRYNOID FOREST

PLANTIN PARK

DRAPERSTOWN

DESERTMARTIN

INISCARN FOREST

REUBEN'S GLEN

SLIEVE GALLION

MONEYMORE

SPRINGHILL HOUSE

LISSAN HOUSE & DEMESNE

LOUGH FEA

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The special landscape known as the Sperrins Gateway focuses on the south eastern part of County Derry-Londonderry and is an ideal destination for recreational walking. It offers a variety of walks for those wanting to get away from it all and experience the wild, unspoilt nature of this landscape.

Despite the scenery and variety of walking opportunities a first time visit can come as a surprise as it is possible you'll find that you have the hills entirely to yourself.

The great thing about these trails is that if you are new to outdoor recreation and walking or visiting the area the first time there are

various options to suit all abilities and as they are waymarked you won't get lost easily!

Whether you are new to walking or an old hand there are plenty of trails that will give you a flavour of this area.





# CROCKBRACK WAY



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## Crockbrack Way

This is a permissive path. The trail has been made possible by a number of landowners giving permission. Please be respectful of landowners and note that this is not a public right of way.

**Trail Distance:** 11km

**High Point:** 526m

**Grade:** Moderate to difficult

### Terrain:

Variable - country roads, green lanes, mountain tracks, open heather covered mountain and a short stretch over boggy/eroded peat with no formal path. Stiles are provided where they are needed.

### Go prepared:

Waterproof clothing and strong walking boots are recommended.

### Maps:

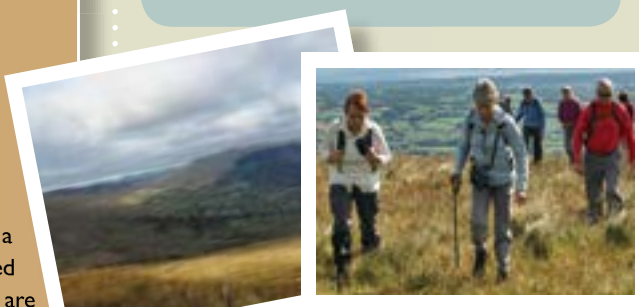
A map of the area is useful but not essential.

OSNI Discoverer Map Series  
1:50,000 Sheet 13

Ordnance Survey Sperrins  
Activity Map 1:25,000

## START

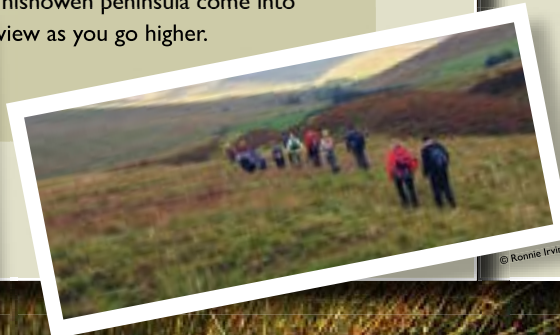
The starting point for this walk is Mulligan's Pub in Moneyneena, situated on the B40 Draperstown Moneyneena Road. From the pub car park cross the road and turn left up the Drumderg road following the marker posts for the Crockbrack Way. The route continues uphill along the road eventually crossing a cattle grid and becoming a mountain track underfoot.



© Ronnie Irvine

Crockmore

As you rise the view behind extends first over Moydamlaght Forest on the slopes of Mullaghmore. A large glacial erratic sits in a rushy field to the right of the track, on closer examination this rock is around 10ft high and composed of folded, contorted and very ancient schist rock. Views of the distinctive summits of Benbradagh, Binevenagh and the Inishowen peninsula come into view as you go higher.



© Ronnie Irvine

Follow the track as it leads you to Crockmore (Cnoc Mor – big hill) 478m. There are extensive deposits of blanket bog here while ahead the hidden mountain lough of Lough Ouske on the northern slopes of Slievevaddy (Sliabh an mhadaidh – mountains of the dog) is revealed.



Crockbrack

© Ronnie Irvine



Craigbane

At this point you leave the track and start walking towards the higher summit of Crockbrack (Cnoc Breac – speckled hill) over open countryside with no formal paths. The trail climbs up over blanket bog and moorland grasses, cross a stile and walk towards the summit, keeping a fence to your left. At the summit there is a lot of eroding blanket bog just as there was on Crockmore. There are excellent views towards Lough Fea, Six Towns and Davagh. Lough Fea sits in an area of quite flat but boggy ground.

Follow the fence on your left downhill for some 500m until you intersect with another fence running off to the right. Turn right and follow this fence for 1km keeping it on your left as you descend from Crockbrack just above the headwaters of the Drumderg River before climbing towards Craigbane.

On reaching the bottom of the slope, continue straight on, walking upslope again and keeping the fence to your left. Go over the stile and turn right towards the summit of Craigbane (there is a man-made track here).

The views from this point are superb and extend from south-east to north-east over Slieve Gallion, Draperstown, the Moyola Valley and Maghera with Lough Neagh, Lough Beg and the Bann Valley further to the east.

Continue to follow the track and on reaching another Y-junction follow the right hand path and continue downhill. You soon reach a gate which you go over and continue downhill. After you reach the first farmhouse, the track turns into a tarred road. Follow this road downhill. After crossing the bridge over the Dunlogan River you come to a junction with the B40 Feeny-Moneyneena road. Turn right here and follow the road back to the pub car park in Moneyneena.







## HUDY'S WAY



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HILLWALKS





## Hudy's Way

Hudy's Way is a Public Right of Way

**Trail Distance:** 10km

**Grade:** Easy to Moderate

### Terrain:

Variable - country roads, lanes, farmyards, fields, forest woodland and open mountain with no formal paths. Foot bridges and stiles are provided where they are required.

### Go prepared:

Waterproof clothing and strong walking boots are recommended.

### Maps:

A map of the area is useful but not essential.

OSNI Discoverer Map Series  
1:50,000 Sheet 13

Ordnance Survey Sperrins  
Activity Map 1:25,000

## START

As this is a circular trail there are a number of convenient starting points.



The trail may be walked in either direction, however, we have outlined a route starting at the community centre. Leaving the community centre car park turn left towards the village and continue along the public footpath crossing the Douglas Bridge and up the hill. At Drumderg Cottages turn right into Drumderg Road, Hudy's Way signage and waymarkers point the way.

Continue upwards along the country road as it winds past houses and the occasional abandoned farm house. Signs for both Hudy's Way and Ulster Way point left towards the derelict clachan of Crockataggart. Beyond Crockataggart, follow the field track left past a deserted farmhouse and uphill. Waymarkers will direct you towards a stile to the left along the hedge line. Cross the Drumderg

River at the metal footbridge and another stile brings you into a field. Walk towards another abandoned farmhouse and the Dunlogan road. Turn left onto the Dunlogan Road and continue westwards and slightly uphill. Metal road signs indicate the route leaves the road onto a lane leading to a private house and farmyard. Pass the house on the left and go through the gate taking care to leave it as you found it. Immediately turn right along a grassy lane towards some old but atmospheric farmstead ruins.



Passing the ruins the route turns right and then crosses the Dunlogan River at the footbridge. A stile leads into rough meadow. Keeping to the right of this field a stile leads into another field, cross this adjoining field and another stile leads to a third field where another stile will bring you onto a grassy lane leading onto the Ranaghan Road.

Turn right along Ranaghan Road for a short distance before a sign leads you left across some fields. Stay to the left where a stile leads towards a stream. The route continues past a modern bungalow and the access lane leads to the Moneyneeny Road.

Turn Right on the Moneyneeny Road and shortly a sign will lead left towards Crockawilla on the Moneyneeny Lane. This lane soon joins the Moydamlaght Road where you turn left and after a short distance you reach Moydamlaght Forest car park.

Follow the waymarkers through the forest uphill where Hudy's Way leaves the other trails and turns right along a grassy track eastwards between the trees.

Near the forest boundary the route turns north leaving the forest before crossing some boardwalk and continues downhill past a farmhouse and through the farmyard. Follow this lane downhill and bearing right where you join the Dunmurray Road. Turn right at the cross roads onto the Fivemilestraight which leads back into Moneyneena. A final right turn will lead you back along the public footpath to the community centre.







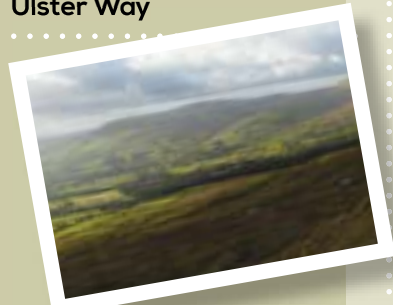
Ulster-Ireland



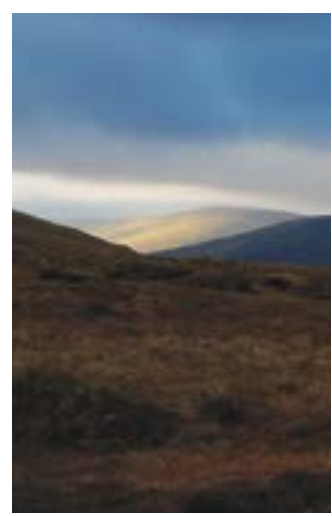
The International Appalachian Trail traverses Ulster from Slieve League in Co. Donegal to Larne in Co. Antrim. Here, this trail follows the route of the Ulster Way through the Sperrins.



## Ulster Way



Glenshane



Crockmore

### START

The long distance walking trail known as the Ulster Way is a circular walking trail around Northern Ireland. The two sections from Gortin to Moneyneena and Moneyneena to Dungiven have been revised to offer a more scenic and quality off road experience.

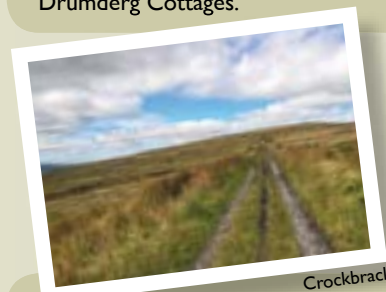


© Ronnie Irvine

From Gortin the route follows the Glenelly valley from west to east and once you past the county boundary and the council welcome signs the route leaves the public road B47 and follows a stony track across the Glengomna Water and uphill. The track eventually ends in a peat bog and the route continues uphill. Keep the fence to your left as it leads eastwards to the summit of Crockbrack (526m).

Cross the stile joining the Crockbrack Way and turn right and descend towards Crockmore along the fence, this time on your right. A stony track will lead downhill,

continue to follow this track as it zig zags down the slopes of Crockmore. Continuing along the Crockbrack Way for a distance the route then branches off to the left at a cattle grid. This track leads to a small abandoned clachan called Crockataggart. From here a farm laneway leads to the tarmac road and into the village beside the Drumderg Cottages.



Crockbrack

Turn left towards the village of Moneyneena crossing the Douglas Bridge using the public footpath. Continue through the village passing the community centre and Primary School on your right along the B40. Keep right at the fork in the road and continue along on the Moydamlaght Road to reach the entrance to Moydamlaght Forest. A number of walking trails are waymarked within the forest so follow the Ulster Way waymarkers uphill and through the forest on forest roads to Craig na shoke. Cross the stile and continue left along the bottom of the rock face. From here the route scrambles uphill and crosses a small fence and continues up and around, avoiding

the actual rock face, to the right and then left uphill where the boggy ground stretches over the mountain moorland linking Moydamlaght and Glenshane Forests. Take care for very wet ground under foot avoid deep squelchy bright green sphagnum areas.

A stile leads into Glenshane forest where the ground is steep and a rocky path leads through the trees to the 'mass rock' used as a place of worship during the penal times. The forest tracks lead downhill through the trees before markers direct you to the track on the left. The trail continues downhill through the forest before reaching the Glenshane Bridge. A right turn here will allow a detour off route to the Glenshane Road (A6) and the Ponderosa, Ireland's highest pub and restaurant for refreshments.

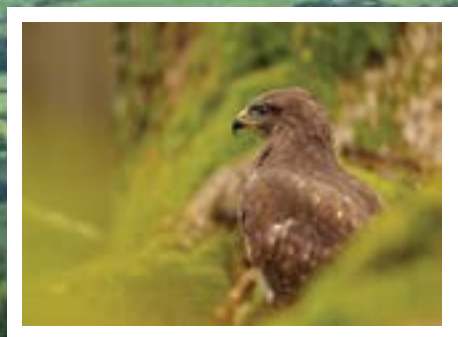
Turning left the route leaves Glenshane Forest heading north to continue along a good grassy track contouring around Corick Mountain. At Corick Bridge the track joins the Corick Road. Follow this quiet country road crossing the River Roe at Cluntygeeragh Bridge and turn left at the junction. Corick Road leads onto the Birren Road uphill before reaching the busy A6 Belfast – Derry/ Glenshane Road. Taking care when crossing the road, turn left and follow the public footpath to Dungiven.







Peregrine Falcon



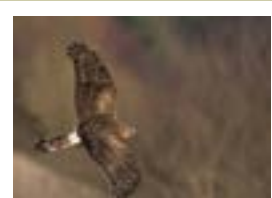
Buzzard



## EAGLE'S ROCK

### Eagle's Rock Trail

This trail lasting approximately 2 hours will lead you through conifer forest on a climb up the slopes of Mullaghmore to the stunning rock face of Craig-na-shoke. The effort is rewarded with extensive views out over the surrounding hills and countryside. The return journey starts by retracing your steps before the trail branches off to the right and returns to the car park through a small stand of beech trees.



Hen Harrier

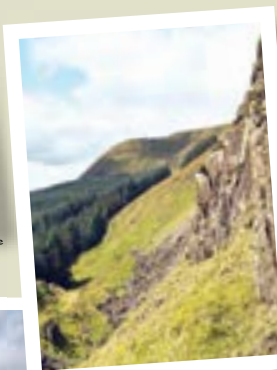


Harebell

© Ronnie Irvine



Parsley Fern © Ronnie Irvine



Mullaghmore



## FOREST TRAILS





## MOYDAMLAGHT

### Moydamlaght short trail

A short circular trail which takes approximately 30 minutes and follows forest road through the conifer trees while the later section leads back to the car park along a single track through a small plantation of beech trees. The trail is enjoyed all year round as the beech trees beautifully mark the passing of the seasons with brilliant green foliage in summer, carpets of bluebells in spring and a rust orange display in autumn.

### Moydamlaght medium loop

Feeling a little more energetic? The circular trail offers an extension to the short trail by going further up the slopes of Mullaghmore where extensive views can be had. In summer swathes of purple rosebay willow herb bloom along the sunny edges of path.



## DERRYNOID

### Derrynoid Wood Walk

**Distance:** 1.7km circular

The walk commences in the car park of the Derrynoid Centre (Closed). Derrynoid Lodge was home to the notorious hanging judge, Judge Torrens. The former Rural College was built on the site of the outbuildings, coach houses and stables of the country house. Although the buildings and centre are now closed the grounds remain open to the public. The route makes for an easy stroll on forest paths with no obstacles or difficult sections. The walk forms a loop and can be extended to take in another 1 km of woodland.

### Derrynoid Moyola river trail

**Distance:** 2km

The walk is an easy stroll and comprises of a stoned pathway among native and coniferous woodland and riverside. The woodland is a mix of planted noble fir, oak and beech with a natural understorey of bramble, holly, ivy and wood sorrel. The wood has a good ground flora with most woodland plants being present including wood sorrel, wood anemone, primrose, buttercup and a variety of fungi. It is host to a range of bird species alongside bats, grey squirrel, fox and badger. The close proximity to the river greatly enhances the biodiversity which offers fine views of the river and the 'big bridge' Derrynoid Bridge.



## FOREST TRAILS







## Iniscarn Forest & Slieve Gallion

**Approx Distance:** 8km

**Grade:** Easy to Moderate

### **Terrain:**

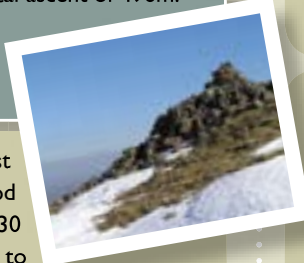
Forest road, track, open mountain & country roads.

### **Waymarked:**

Waymarked from forest car park to summit only. This is a steep walk with a total ascent of 496m.

### **Maps:**

Sheet 13



Iniscarn Forest is a small wood of just over 130 hectares lying to the west of Desertmartin village. The forest area has various conifer species and approximately four hectares of mature hardwoods, mostly oak. This route follows an off road trail through Iniscarn Forest to a communications mast and cairn on the basalt mountain top - the burial place of Callan, the grandson of Colla Uais, a figure from pre-history named as High King of Ireland. Views of the surrounding region include Lough Neagh, the Antrim plateau in the distance and northwards to Lough Foyle and Donegal.

From the start, walk into the forest passing the metal gate marked '1'. On reaching a junction follow the path beyond a metal gate marked '2'.

Continue uphill, at a break in the trees, take the stoned track straight on uphill. Continue along this until it becomes a grassy track. Follow this to the top coming out on open hillside. From here track right following the fence line until you come to a stile. Cross this and head to the mast on the hilltop. From here track right - head towards the cairn that is now in view.

From here you can retrace your steps back through the forest to your starting point or make a longer walk by following the tarmac road from the summit past the viewpoint and back along public road to the Forest entrance (Please note this optional section is not waymarked).

These walks are situated in a working forest environment and may be subject to diversion and closure from time to time. Iniscarn contains many species of birds and animals. Buzzards can be seen in springtime displaying over the mature hardwood areas. Occasionally hen harriers can be spotted hunting on the open moorland adjacent to the forest.







## REUBEN'S GLEN

### Reuben's Glen short trail

Reuben's Glen short trail is along a beautiful ancient coach road that once linked the plantation towns of Draperstown and Moneymore in the early 17th Century.

This particular section through Reuben's Glen is the last remaining identifiable part of what was once an important thoroughfare between the two settlements.

The route follows a small river through a wooded area featuring mature larch trees, with the occasional noble fir, birch and ash. The rest of the route consists mostly of native broadleaves with the occasional Spanish chestnut planted at random. Bluebells and wood sorrel are the dominant ground cover and are a wonderful sight when in full bloom. An abundance of wildlife is also evident.



## FACT FILE

**Location:** A29 Desertmartin to Moneymore Road

**Approx Distance:** 1km

**Terrain:** Forest tracks

**Facilities:** Car parking at roadside lay-by. Picnic site and interpretive information.

### Places of interest nearby:

Cranny School and school house are situated on the Iniscarn Road overlooking Reuben's Glen. This was one of five schools built by the Drapers' Company of London in the early nineteenth century to serve the areas of Draperstown, Brackagh, Slieve Gallion and Moneymore. The school closed in the 1970s and the school house is tourist accommodation.



## FOREST TRAILS





## Springhill House, Moneymore

### Sawpit hill walk

**Approx Distance:** 1.6 km - includes a steep slope and uneven surfaces.

This walk follows the perimeter of the estate. The path passes a small pond, which is home to many frogs, watch closely and you might see one, proceeding on through the laurels which eventually open out into woodland. In spring it is filled with bluebells and the smell of the wild garlic. The path begins a short but steep climb towards the tower, which once was a corn mill. Look out for the remains of the American GI's WW2 camp, concrete pads under the trees show where the foundations of the Nissan huts were sited. When you reach the tower take a moment to enjoy the view down through the beautiful avenue of beech trees, where on a clear day you can see the Sperrin Mountains and Slieve Gallion. The path continues across the front of the tower, passing some of the large oaks that line the edge of the path, marking the boundary of the Springhill estate. The old sawpit would have been located in the field the path runs alongside, timber from the estate was used to build Springhill house over 300 years ago. Eventually the walk will come



to a gradual end through the display of rhododendrons which are at their best in May, and into the ancient yew tree grove, part of the Great Forest of Ulster at the rear of the house.

Swathes of snowdrops carpet the floor beneath these trees in February. Or you can follow the route alongside the large walled garden, towards the Woodland Walk.

### Beech walk

**Distance:** 0.5 km

The beech walk leads you through the avenue of Beech trees replanted in 1984, only one of the original beech trees remains at the beginning of the beech walk, and is approximately 300 years old. The walk leads up to the tower, built in 1731, which was once a corn mill. From the tower views of the Sperrins and Slieve Gallion can be enjoyed on a clear day. The beech trees provide stunning colour throughout the year, from vivid green in the spring to rich reds in the autumn.



## The Woodland Walk and Natural Play trails

**Distance:** 0.8 km - includes uneven surfaces.

This short walk journeys through a young mixed woodland, which has a stunning display of bluebells in the early spring. The woodland opens out into a wildflower meadow, which is alive with colour and insect activity throughout the summer. The path winds through the wildflowers, crossing the main driveway, where you can capture the distinctive view of the front of Springhill house, before stopping at the enchanting tree door to see if the wee folk are at home. Children



and adults alike can enjoy an adventure through the woodlands to uncover clearings, full of natural climbing frames. There are rope swings and dens, mud pie pits and snail racing courses, mystical creatures and thrones to capture imaginations. Encouraging children of all ages to discover the woodland, throughout the seasons, creating their own stories and games as they play. The trail finishes at the exit gate lodge where our second hand book shop is located.







## Lissan House

Lissan House and demesne is an enchanting 267 acre estate of woodland and parkland, situated at the foot of the Sperrin Mountains.

An oasis of beauty and tranquillity, it offers walkers and lovers of nature a truly enjoyable experience, with the only sounds being of birdsong and of the Lissan water. 2014 saw the completion of new gravel and woodchip paths throughout the entire estate, allowing the public to explore the Lissan estate like never before. A world within a world, walkers can stroll along the iconic 'dark avenue', bask in the glories of the beautiful parkland, or take a seat and absorb stunning vistas of the Tyrone countryside. Famous for the annual display of bluebells, walkers can enjoy the surprise of magical colour at every turn. Whilst exploring the estate, walkers can also see our restored icehouse, our restored turbine house, and walk across the 'White Bridge', designed by Davis Duckart.

Parking on the estate is free, and tea and coffee is served in the dining room of the mansion house during the summer season, where our shop is also located. The estate is open all year, and walkers are most welcome!



Woodland path



Restored Ice House



## Plantin Park, Draperstown

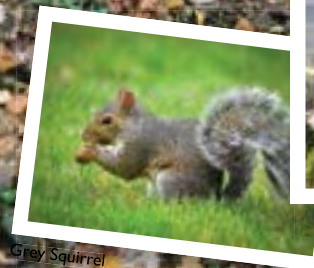
**Distance:** 1km circular trail

### Facilities include:

Children's play park, seating, picnic area and a small playing field.

Enjoy a stroll through the Plantin Park hidden away in the middle of Draperstown. The walk is on surfaced pathways over footbridges and along a small tributary of the Moyola River. The trail can be accessed from the Derrynoid Road entrance or via Moykeeran Housing Estate on the Tobermore Road. Following a circular route the trail leads uphill to a view point with lovely views northwest towards Mullaghmore and Moydamlaght forest.

For such a small area there is a good mix of habitat that attracts birdlife, insects and wildlife including bats, grey squirrel and fox.



Grey Squirrel



Draperstown





**Maps:**

Walkers are recommended to carry the relevant Ordnance Survey Map.

OSNI Discoverer Map Series 1:50,000 Sheet 13

Ordnance Survey Sperrins Activity Map 1:25,000

**Respect for landowners & promoting responsible use of the outdoors:**

The walking trails presented in this guide have been made possible by the work of the local community and through permission of a number of local landowners. Walkers are advised to be respectful that they may be on private land and are encouraged to make themselves aware of and adhere to the principles of 'Leave no trace'.

**Walkni.com**

For further information on walking trails across Northern Ireland please visit [walkni.com](http://walkni.com). Information is provided on a range of walks as well as downloadable maps, suggested itineraries and everything you need to know when planning a walking trip in Northern Ireland.

**Dogs**

Please note that dogs are not permitted on any of the hill walks, even on a lead, as it alarms livestock and can put livestock and people at risk.

**Emergency**

In the event of an emergency call the police 999 or 112

**Go prepared**

Weather conditions in the Sperrin uplands can be very changeable - even during the summer months. Waterproof and windproof clothing are essential and strong walking boots are advised.

**Disclaimer**

*Every care has been taken to ensure accuracy in the compilation of this guide. The information provided is, to the best of the promoter's knowledge correct at the time of going to print. The promoters cannot accept responsibility for any errors or omissions but if any are brought to their notice future publications will be amended accordingly.*





