

Mournes Outdoor property Access Statement



Access via Donard Car Park and Bloody Bridge Car Park (Newry Mourne and Down District Council)

T: 0243751467

E: mournes@nationaltrust.org.uk

Local Public Transport: Translink (www.translink.co.uk)

Introduction

The Slieve Donard property covers approximately 526 hectares and forms a very important part of the Eastern Mourne ASSI & SAC, notified for its biological and earth science interests – the extent and quality of the habitats represented is particularly notable. The altitude ranges from 852 metres on the summit of Slieve Donard down to 160 metres on the eastern fringes, with the habitats ranging from montane heath on the highest peaks of Slieve Donard & Slieve Commedagh, down through upland heath and blanket bog to lower-level heath on some of the lower slopes. The National Trust manage the main footpath which follows the Glen River path from above the Forest Service trees to the Mourne wall and then to the summit of both Slieve Donard and Slieve Commedagh. The National Trust also owns 3 disused quarries within the Mourne.

Bloody Bridge and the Mourne Coastal Footpath can be found along a scenic stretch of the Co Down coastline, bordered on one side by the Irish Sea, and on the other by the foothills of the Mourne Mountains. Located about 4km south of Newcastle beside the Annalong road it marks the beginning of one of the most popular access routes into the Mourne for hill walkers. It was declared an Area of Special Scientific Interest in 1995. Newry and Mourne District Council has provided a car park, picnic tables and toilet facilities adjacent to the site.

Dogs on leads are welcome and all areas are grazed seasonally. Both Donard car park and Bloody Bridge car park are owned and managed by Down District Council.

NB - Mobile phone reception is limited across the site, with it being highly dependent on the network you are on. In an emergency, please make contact on the phone number above as soon as you are able.

Arrival & Parking Facilities

There are two main car parks that provide access to the National Trust land within the Mourne.

A small car park at Bloody Bridge (see left picture below) from which you have quick access to the Mourne Coastal Path and Bloody Bridge which also allows access into the. You can also pick up the 1.5km waypointed path along the Mourne Coastal Path which takes you to Williams Harbour and also accesses St Mary's Church. It's important to note that National Trust ownership at Bloody Bridge ends at the wooden bridge just below the large NI water pipe, the land above this is in private ownership. There is no charge to park and is on a first-come basis.



A much larger car park is situated in Donard Park, Newcastle (see right picture over). The surface here is firm and there are marked parking bays – there is also an overflow car park which can be opened on busy days. From here access the main route up to Slieve Donard through Donard Forest. The land is part of the Annesley State, leased by the Forest Service with the access (public right of way) managed by Newry, Mourne and Down District Council. It is a National Trust land is located above the tree line. There is no charge to park and is on a first-come basis.

There are refreshment facilities available in Newcastle Main Street including a shops, tearooms, pubs and some toilet facilities are available in both Donard Park and Bloody Bridge Car Park. These however are not managed by the National Trust.

Glen River Path

The main path which takes you to the summit of Slieve Donard and Slieve Commedagh. Starting at Donard Park (Newry, Mourne and Down District Council), it initially takes you through 2km within Northern Ireland Forest Service leased land. The walk is approximately 4 miles in total and It takes about 3.5 hours to complete this walk at a moderate pace. Paths are varied, can be steep and can become wet, muddy, slippery and dangerous in poor weather conditions – weather forecast should be checked before beginning the walk and it should not be attempted in adverse weather conditions. The path has a steep incline along much of its length.

Please note:

- There may be loose scree along the path especially on the higher sections.
- There are areas of stone pitching and gravel paths we would encourage visitors to stick to these path to protect the fragile habitats and reduce erosion.
- There are points where the path enters areas with steep drops, so high supervision of children, vulnerable adults and dogs on leads is suggested.
- There are points where access to water is possible along the Glen River Path so high supervision of children and vulnerable adults is required
- There are some difficult sections of forest service path on way to Glen River path, caution should be taken on slippery rocks and trip hazards such as tree routes
- ATV quads and scrambler bikes are not permitted on site
- Metal detecting is not permitted on site



The path to the summit of Donard can be picked up along the Mourne Wall.



The summit of both Slieve Donard and Slieve Commedagh are marked by small shelters.



Slieve Donard summit Water Service Tower (Shelter)

Bloody Bridge Path

To access the Bloody Bridge path from the Newry Mourne And Down District Council car park you must cross the main Kilkeel Road, caution should be taken as this is a very busy road with fast moving traffic. The path is a mixture of gravel and stone pitching and follows a fairly steep gradient 850m where it opens up onto the open Mournes, the area above the wooden bridge is not owned by the National Trust and there is no formal route beyond this point.

Please note:

- There are areas of stone pitching and gravel paths we would encourage visitors to stick to these path to protect the fragile habitats and reduce erosion.
- There are points where the path enters areas with steep drops, so high supervision of children, vulnerable adults and dogs on leads is required.
- There are points where access to water is possible along the Bloody Bridge river so high supervision of children and vulnerable adults is suggested.
- This is a high risk area for wildfires so fires and barbeques are not permitted.
- This area is grazed during May and June so we request dogs to be kept on leads.
- ATV quads and scrambler bikes are not permitted on site
- Metal detecting is not permitted on site



Mourne Coastal Path

The Mourne Coastal Path is scenic 1km coastal walk from Bloody Bridge Car Park to Williams Harbour shingle beach which also provides access to St Mary's Church. The path is varied, can be steep and can become wet, muddy, slippery and dangerous in poor weather conditions with steep drops in some sections. It also contains sections of steps along several sections.

- There are points where the path enters areas with steep drops, so high supervision of children, vulnerable adults and dogs on leads is required.
- There are points where access to water is possible along the glen Bloody Bridge and Irish Sea so high supervision of children and vulnerable adults is suggested.
- This is a high risk area for wildfires so fires and barbeques are not permitted
- There are several viewing areas with natural rock occurring, caution should be taken as these areas can be liable to subsidence and slippery underfoot.
- ATV quads and scrambler bikes are not permitted on site
- Metal detecting is not permitted on site



Contact details for more information

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Date April 2020





