



south carlow adventure trail



carlow
through the waters of time

2 introduction by kathryn thomas

Welcome to my home county of Carlow and in particular South County Carlow. Its wide open spaces, mountains and valleys are ideal for the outdoors, whether for a leisurely activity or a real adventure. Walk a towpath or a mountain trail, hire a river barge or canoe and kayak along the rapids of the River Barrow, freewheel on quiet roads or navigate the winding trails of the Blackstairs Mountains on a mountain bike. Whatever your chosen sport, the South Carlow landscape and its people make it that bit more enjoyable.



Photo ©Tourism Ireland



Photo ©Fáilte Ireland



Kathryn Thomas (photo ©Norman McCloskey)

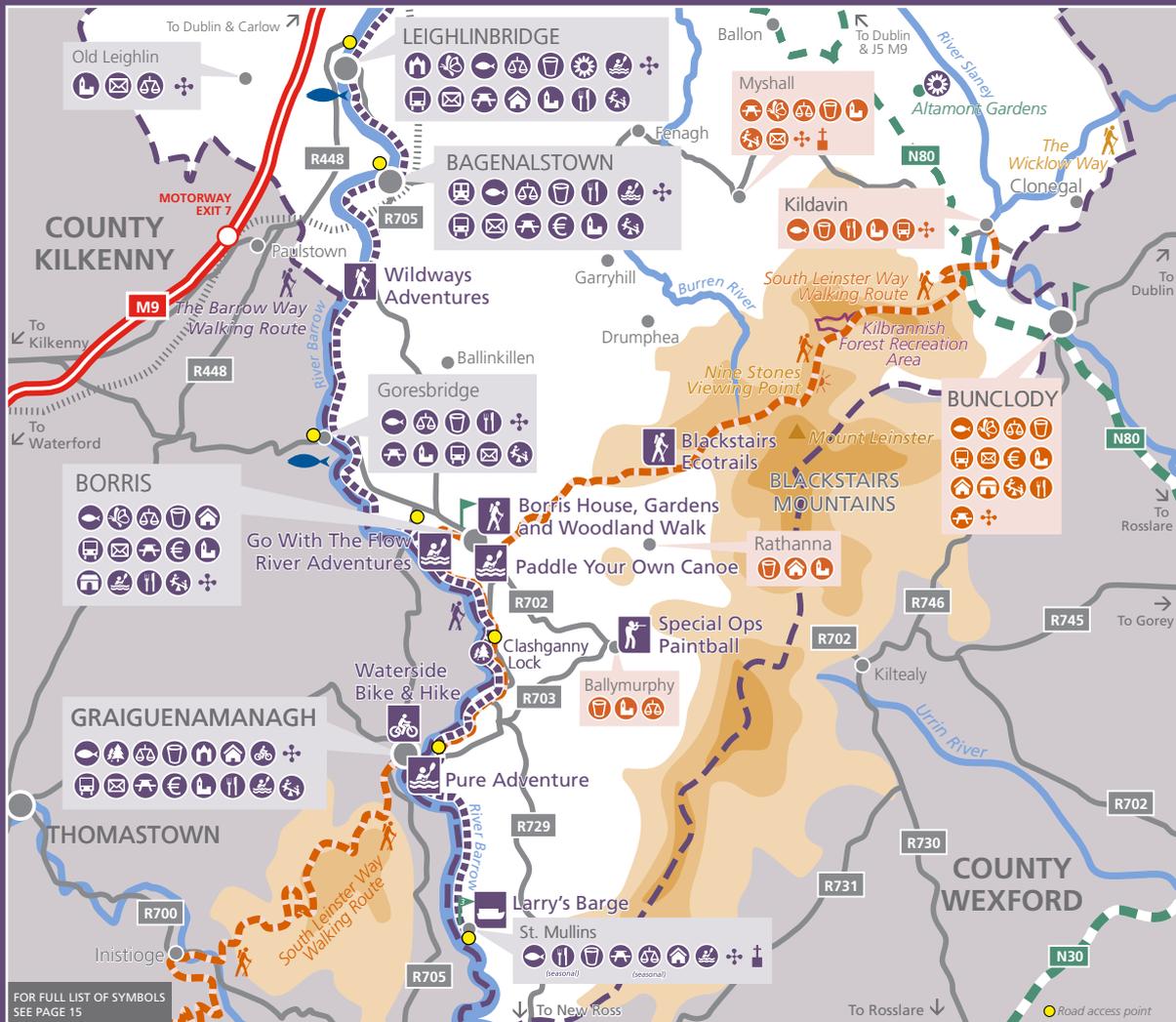
Photos featured on the front cover:
Hiking boots on top banner ©Fáilte Ireland
left to right: Mount Leinster, the highest peak in the Blackstairs Mountain Range; Canoeing on the River Barrow; Borris House (photo ©Fáilte Ireland); Cycling at Tinnabinch along the Barrow Way (photo ©Fáilte Ireland)

The enchanting River Barrow Valley with its rich agricultural hinterland and the glorious ridges of the Blackstairs Mountains provide an unspoiled environment for the walker, cyclist and angler. Once a commercial waterway, the River Barrow is now a relatively undiscovered gem, punctuated by ancient bridges, charming villages and 200-year-old navigation channels, locks and pretty lock houses.

At the heart of South Carlow is the charming rural village of Borris, with its traditional Irish street front and spectacular mountain setting. The village is home to Borris House, built by the McMorrough Kavanagh clan who were Celtic Kings of Leinster.

If you need a relaxing break, fresh air and stimulation, Carlow is the natural choice – from walking and cycling to cruising, canoeing, fishing and mountain biking – the opportunities are endless! Exploring South Carlow does not have to involve a budget – there are plenty of free and fun things to experience and explore. It is a privilege to feel the elation of exertion here, the sense of achievement, the stunning, unspoilt and often remote views of the landscape, the flora and fauna and the sense of well-being. See you there!

Kathryn Thomas
Television presenter



contents

Introduction by Kathryn Thomas	2
County map	3
Borrís House	4
Angling on the River Barrow	5
Larry's Barge	6
Go With The Flow River Adventures	7
Paddle Your Own Canoe	8
Pure Adventure	9
Waterside Bike & Hike	10
Special Ops Paintball	11
Specialist Activities and Clubs	12
Blackstairs Eco Trails	13
Wildways Adventures	14
Introduction to Barrow, South Leinster and Wicklow Ways	15
Barrow Way	16
South Leinster Way	23
Carlow Services Guide	27





Photo © Fáilte Ireland



borris house, gardens and woodland walk

Borris House, the ancestral home of the McMorrough Kavanaghs, Kings of Leinster, is one of the most beautiful and historic Irish country houses located in the spectacular scenery of Carlow's Barrow Valley.



Photo © Fáilte Ireland

Address: Borris, Co. Carlow

t: +353 (0)59 977 1884

e: info@borrishouse.com

w: www.borrishouse.com

Facilities: Car park, toilets, guided tours of house and chapel, original Victorian laundry, short film of house and family, sculptures, fairy trail, seasonal childrens' nature trails, tea/coffee, scenic walk – restricted wheelchair and pram access, good walking shoes are advisable.

How to find us: In the centre of Borris village.

GPS: 52.598644, -6.926618

Open: May-September, check website for opening times. Admission charge applies.



Explore the grounds of the estate taking in Mount Leinster, the Blackstairs Mountains, and the River Barrow. Stroll along the woodland paths, view the original Stew Pond and, on your way, take in the original Victorian laundry, the recently restored granary, and the 18th century Ice House. The new lace garden within the walls of the original laundry green, illustrates the fascinating story of Borris Lace. Visitors can also avail of a tour of Borris House and the private Chapel of St. Moling and learn more about the estate and the people who lived and worked there.

The estate features a stunning looped walk of varied inclines, terrain and views and follows a trail through impressive woodlands to the confluence of the River Barrow and the Mountain River, and back again. Beginning adjacent to Borris House, the walk proceeds downhill, past an old saw mill. The trail then progresses up a moderate incline through managed woodland of native species such as oak, ash, holly, yew and scots pine.

The walk then proceeds downhill and over a charming 19th century hump-backed bridge. The trail loops back and continues for a short distance along the banks of the Mountain River, before ascending a steep incline. Remember to collect a map on arrival at the front gate entrance.

The looped walk is a must for those who enjoy a comfortable country walk. It is not suitable for wheelchairs or buggies (unless specifically designed for rough terrain). Admission fee applies.



angling on the river barrow

The River Barrow is renowned as a coarse and game angling river for bream, roach, dace, hybrids, rudd, perch and pike, brown trout, sea trout and salmon. The river has easy access points via a towpath. In 2016 a strict catch and release policy applies in respect of all salmon, while the river is closed for all eel fishing. The salmon and brown trout season on the River Barrow commences on March 17th and finishes on September 30th. Other fishing (with the exception of salmon and brown trout) is available year round.



The rivers Greese and Lerr, tributaries of the River Barrow, provide excellent brown trout fishing while the River Burrin is one of the finest trout fishing rivers in the region.

The excellent stocks of quality pike are one of the main attractions for anglers on the River Barrow, with stocks of 20+lbs. Pike angling is carried out on all stretches of the river between Athy and St. Mullins with the main locations being Bahana Wood, just above St. Mullins, Graiugenanagh and Ballytiglea Bridge near Borris. Pike, bream and hybrids are the primary species but rudd is also abundant here. It is vital to make oneself familiar with the pike regulations, prior to fishing for pike. In 2015 the River Barrow produced a specimen weight roach/bream hybrid of 2.35kg from St. Mullins, a specimen pike from Graiugenanagh and a specimen weight for dace at St. Mullins.

The River Barrow is truly the last remaining fishery for twaite shad where they still enter in large numbers. They are normally caught by spinning but can also be caught on the fly and a competition is held at St. Mullins each May. All anglers are encouraged to use barbless hooks if possible. A state licence is only required to fish for salmon and sea trout. Available from Murph's, Tullow Street, Carlow t: +353 (0)59 913 2839 w: www.murphsfishing.com

For further information visit www.fisheriesireland.ie e: info@fisheriesireland.ie t: +353 (0)1 884 2600

Southern County FISHING RESORT

Whether you're an expert fisherman or just beginning to discover the sport of fishing, Southern County Fishing Resort is the perfect place for you to learn and hone your skills. With three lakes on over 10 acres of water requiring different skills, you will be sure to satisfy your fishing experience level as you try your hand at fly, trout or bait fishing.

Milltown, Garryhill, Bagenalstown, Co. Carlow
T: +353 (0)59 915 7773 E: southerncounty@hotmail.com

www.southerncounty.ie

Find us on



larry's barge

Experience the elegance and beauty of the River Barrow while cruising on your own private barge, winding your way through natural, historic landscapes. Sit back and enjoy breathtaking scenery, this is unspoilt Ireland at its best! You can charter Larry's Barge with an experienced skipper for a day trip (maximum 10 passengers) or an overnight cruise for up to three days (four people maximum).



Address: The Quay, St. Mullins, Co. Carlow

t: +353 (0)87 685 2726

e: larry@larrysbarge.com

w: www.larrysbarge.com

Facilities: Fully equipped barge with sleeping accommodation and all catering facilities, cooking also available by prior arrangement, featuring fresh local produce.

How to find us: Larry's Barge is moored at the lock in St. Mullins village, 10km south of Borris.

GPS: 52.496732, -6.937293

Open: Year round



Unwind as you move gently through the countryside with the soothing rhythm of the river. Day trips from St. Mullins where Larry's Barge is moored take visitors through the beautiful South Carlow/Kilkenny landscape, skirting the majestic Blackstairs Mountains en route to Graigueamanagh.

Explore woodland trails, historic sites, beautiful locks, lock houses and sleepy villages. Enjoy evenings moored along the riverbank and take in some fishing before dining on-board. Weather permitting, why not lunch outside on the river bank?

A customised itinerary is created for those availing of the overnight cruise option with visits to the main attractions as well as insider tips promised, all personally escorted by Larry himself.

Larry's Barge is finished to the highest standards and promises top-class accommodation with tasteful and eclectic furnishings. On-board mouth-watering cooking is arranged by Georgina, using only the finest and freshest local produce.



go with the flow river adventures

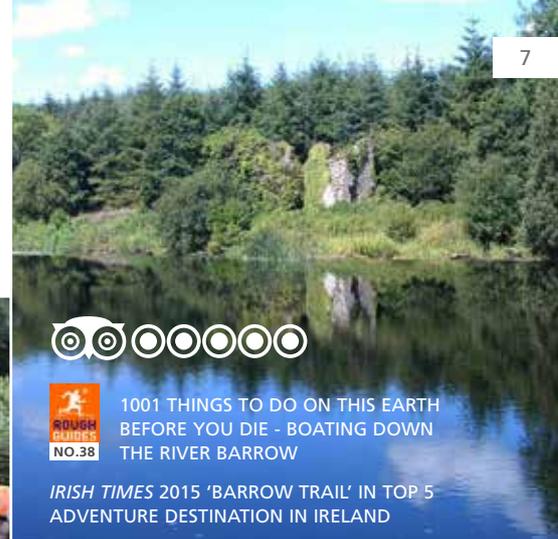
Go With The Flow River Adventures bring the beautiful River Barrow to life. As you canoe through stunning yet tranquil countryside, expect to see magnificent weirs and waterfalls, 200-year-old trees, old lock keepers' cottages, castles, 200-year-old navigation channels, charming and historic towns and villages, and secluded spots for a picnic, quiet dip or a wild swim.



This is a family run, adventure activity business established by Charlie Horan offering affordable, guided canoe trails, canoe hire and canoe holidays on the picturesque River Barrow. No experience is required and the adventure of a canoeing holiday is open to all ages and abilities. A keen and positive team of qualified instructors bring the river to life in an interesting and meaningful way, ensuring good, safe and simple fun on the water.

You will have a wonderful experience on the River Barrow, with tours tailored to your needs, whether that be a whitewater half-day, full of thrills, spills, fun and laughter or a one- or two-day guided and certified eco adventure. Visitors can also choose a half-day interpretive tour with all kinds of stories, history and interesting insights. Or you may prefer to go it alone at your own pace on a self-guided canoe trail for two or three days. Multi-day self-guided trails include wild camping, canoeing, cycling, and walking with a guidebook.

All of our activities are suitable for families, sporting organisations, schools, youth and learning groups, charities, corporate team building, and stag and hen parties.



1001 THINGS TO DO ON THIS EARTH BEFORE YOU DIE - BOATING DOWN THE RIVER BARROW

IRISH TIMES 2015 'BARROW TRAIL' IN TOP 5 ADVENTURE DESTINATION IN IRELAND

Address: Various locations on the River Barrow and Borris village

t: +353 (0)87 252 9700
e: info@gowiththeflow.ie
w: www.gowiththeflow.ie

Facilities: Wet suits, safety equipment, changing facilities, full tuition from qualified, experienced and friendly guides.

How to find us: Go With The Flow River Adventures provide canoeing at various stretches along the River Barrow and also have a base in Borris village.

GPS: 52.600068, -6.9236807

Open: Year round





paddle your own canoe

Hire a canoe and paddle down the River Barrow through some of Ireland's most scenic and beautiful landscapes and locations. Nathan Horan of Paddle Your Own Canoe offers visitors the opportunity to rent a canoe and camping gear and organise a trip along the River Barrow. During your adventure you will pass through lush countryside, rolling hills, and forests and by mountain ranges including Mount Leinster, the Blackstairs and Brandon Hill.



Address: Milltown, Borris, Co. Carlow

t: +353 (0)87 414 0461

e: info@paddleyourowncanoe.ie

w: www.paddleyourowncanoe.ie

Facilities: Transport to/from the start/finish of each tour, canoes and all safety gear, dry bags and barrels, tents and other camping needs.

How to find us: Take the first left after Ballytigliae Bridge. The bridge is situated close to the village of Borris, off the Borris - Graiguenamanagh Road R705.

GPS: 52.596667, -6.946639

Open: Year round



Beautiful riverside towns and villages offer ample opportunity for shopping, eating and enjoying a pint or two of Guinness in any of the unique, authentic and even famous pubs. You will pass by historic sites including country houses, castles, excellent examples of industrial heritage and monastic sites including Borris House, the 6th century monastic site in St. Mullins, Milford Mills and the White Castle.

The supplied two-man open Canadian canoe has enough room to store luggage, paddles, buoyancy aides, helmets, camping gear, dry bags, watertight barrels, tents, sleeping mats, and kelly kettles. Riverside B&B or hotel accommodation is also available. There is an abundance of wildlife on this river with plenty of opportunities to see otters, egrets, herons, kingfishers, salmon, trout and many more. A longer six-day adventure starts in Monasterevin and finishes in New Ross covering 107km, passing through eight different towns and villages along the way. The river also has a 200-year-old navigation system which means there is a tow/walking path running parallel to the river, making it safe and convenient to get off the water at any time. It is possible to camp along the banks of the river. Suitable for beginners and more experienced canoeists, ideal for friends, romantic couples, families, and stag or hen adventures.

Get your adrenaline flowing with whitewater kayaking from Pure Adventure. Specialists in exceptional outdoor experiences and training in outdoor sports, Pure Adventure is based in Graiguenamanagh on the banks of the River Barrow in the heart of the Barrow Valley. It's a family run business, bringing you passion, experience and trained quality instructors.



Whether it's whitewater kayaking or a gentler canoeing tour of the River Barrow, you will be able to enjoy the weirs and rapids of Ireland's second longest river. Breathe in the scenic beauty of the wooded river valley and discover the historical transport route of the Barrow Navigation system.

Stand Up Paddle Boarding is one of the most relaxing water activities and gives a real sense of the wilderness, tradition, and adventure associated with a trip along the River Barrow. The feeling of walking on water is hard to beat as you watch kingfishers buzz by, herons fishing on rocks, and an otter swimming around.

Pure Adventure offers something for everyone and the classic canoe tour takes visitors along the River Barrow in the most relaxing way possible. You will glide from the river to the canal, utilising the 200-year-old lock system to descend as far as the historic village of St. Mullins where you can step off the water and straight into a beautiful riverside café. Pure Adventure also offers a guided walking service in the Barrow Valley. Immerse yourself in the areas around Mount Leinster, the Blackstairs Mountains, Brandon Hill, and the Barrow Way, with unrivalled local knowledge on the tracks and trails of South Carlow. Pure Adventure also offers multi-activity, bike-and-paddle days in conjunction with Waterside Bike and Hike (www.watersideguesthouse.com).



Address: The Quay, Graiguenamanagh, Co. Kilkenny

Contact: Patrick McCormack

t: +353 (0)87 226 5550

e: info@pureadventure.ie

w: www.pureadventure.ie

Facilities: All wet gear, canoes, kayaks, paddle boards and safety equipment.

How to find us: In the town of Graiguenamanagh – follow R705 from Borris

GPS: 52.539363, -6.953981

Open: Year round





waterside bike & hike

Explore a natural wonderland cycling or hiking along the River Barrow towpath, kicking off from the base of Waterside Bike and Hike on the banks of the River Barrow in Graiguenamanagh. Whether you choose to travel upriver or downriver, the trail is spectacular as the river valley is fringed with fabulous deciduous trees and well-preserved hedgerows.



Address: Waterside Guesthouse, The Quay, Graiguenamanagh, Co. Kilkenny

t: +353 (0)59 972 4246

m: +353 (0)86 408 4008

e: bike&hike@watersideguesthouse.com

w: www.watersideguesthouse.com

Facilities: Helmets, locks and hi-viz vests. Bathroom and changing facilities at base.

How to find us: On the Quay in Graiguenamanagh.

GPS: 52.540231, -6.953942

Open: Year round



Waterside maintains a large fleet of top quality mountain bikes perfect for this trail. They also hire out electric mountain bikes for those who want to tackle some of the higher peaks in the area. All bikes come with helmets, hi-viz vests and locks as required and are perfect for families, couples, or groups.

Waterside also offers ecology based bike tours on the traffic-free River Barrow towpath. Whether you want a tour or simply to meander at your own pace, you will marvel at the scenic quality of the River Barrow Valley. There, you can enjoy uninterrupted and peaceful, quiet travel with the opportunity to encounter some of the local wildlife including heron, otter, pine marten, tree creeper and many more.

Stop at a lock gate and learn how cargo boats plied these waters nearly 200 years ago, and maybe a passing barge will illustrate how this navigation still operates today. You may even get a chance to try winding open a lock gate yourself!

Waterside can also offer multi-activity, bike-and-paddle days in conjunction with Pure Adventure (www.pureadventure.ie).



special ops paintball

If you fancy something different for a class trip, birthday, stag or hen party, or just a fun day out with family or friends, Special Ops Paintball is the perfect place for an action-packed day outdoors. With a semi-automatic paintball gun and full safety equipment, Special Ops Paintball is a great way to have safe, adrenaline-filled fun with your friends, classmates, or teammates. Special Ops Paintball can tailor your package to the size of the group.



The game is played outdoors so you get the benefit of a real-life scenario, competing with and against your friends. It's fun, safe, with plenty of exercise and laughs along the way.

With over 15 years' experience running paintball games, the friendly and professional staff on hand will ensure you have a great day out. Full safety equipment, camouflage overalls and a safety mask are provided, though you'll have to bring your own footwear! Minimum age 12 years.



Address: Ballymurphy, Borris, Co. Carlow

t: +353 (0)85 775 2495

e: info@specialops.ie

w: www.specialops.ie

Facilities: Varied game zones, toilets, car park, snacks and refreshments, limited wheelchair accessibility. Garda firearms authorisation and full public liability insurance.

How to find us: 5km south of Borris off the R729 Borris – New Ross road.

GPS: 52.569729, -6.892497

Open: Year round



★ specialist activities and clubs



The **Blackstairs Ramblers** are a group of hill walkers who, as their name suggests, enjoy rambling mainly on the Blackstairs Mountains. They walk on the second and fourth Sunday of every month. Two club walks also take place on Thursday night accommodating different levels of fitness. See the website for a full walk schedule.

The Blackstairs Ramblers

e: info@blackstairsramblers.com

w: www.blackstairsramblers.com



ML Syndicate

m: +353 (0)86 372 9103

e: themlsyndicate10@gmail.com

w: www.themlsyndicate.com



Racing 795

e: racing795@gmail.com

w: www.racing795.com



Tullow Mountaineering Club

m: +353 (0)86 277 2633

e: tullowmc@hotmail.com

w: www.tullowmountaineeringclub.ie



Paraglide Adventure

m: +353 (0)87 258 9245

e: fred@paraglideadventure.com

w: www.paraglideadventure.com



The **ML Syndicate** is Carlow's only dedicated mountain biking club. Whether you are a weekend spinner or a full on racer, join them in the Kilbrannish Hills, on the Blackstairs Mountains, for great fun and adventure. DH, XC, Enduro and social spins all catered for.

Racing 795 sports club enjoys many activities in the Kilbrannish Hills and the Blackstairs Mountains such as road and mountain biking, triathlon, trail running and adventure racing. Host of many popular races in the area including Tri795 and the Mount Leinster MTB Challenge.

Tullow Mountaineering Club organise graded mountain walks every Sunday from Barrack Street, Carlow town. Cars depart at 9.30am with walks graded easy, medium and hard. Walks are located in the local Blackstairs Mountains and in the other surrounding mountain areas. Easy walks are arranged for the first Sunday of every month and are suitable for beginners. Evening walks each Wednesday and Friday. Confirm attendance in advance by visiting Facebook or the website. Bring suitable clothing.

Paraglide Adventure Mount Leinster is an internationally renowned location for hang-gliding and paragliding and a multi-directional site. Whether you are a spectator or enjoy participating, this venue provides a most enjoyable day's entertainment with colourful take offs, set against fabulous scenery. Most Sundays from March to October, weather permitting. For information on paraglide training contact Paraglide Adventure.



blackstairs ecotrails

Want to know more about the birds, flora, fungi, mammals and butterflies of the Blackstairs Mountains and the River Barrow? Blackstairs Ecotrails is a family owned business based in the beautiful Blackstairs Mountains, from where you can enjoy ecotrails, mountain and riverside hikes, foraging, mushroom and wild herbal workshops.



Robert and Mary White will lead you on a two-hour ramble through the lovely lanes, lowlands, bogs and streams of this area looking at the natural topography of the landscape, the local archaeology which includes some fine standing stones and cairns and the splendid flora and fauna.

Lichens and mosses, grasses and ferns, birds, mammals and butterflies are all presented in an easy-to-follow, yet highly entertaining and educational manner. Otters, kingfishers and the little dipper who likes nesting under the many stone bridges in County Carlow all await discovery.

The unique Celtic Tree Trail explores the relationship of the Celts with Ireland's native trees. Depending on the weather, tours are held in the foothills of the Blackstairs – low hills or no hills, along the River Barrow or in the nearby townlands of Rathanna, Tomduff, Liselican or Raheen.

An old barn, dating from 1831, has been renovated into a dedicated centre for all walks, seminars, workshops and school visits and is surrounded by meadows and a lovely rose and water garden.

Foraging hen parties – a fun day in the wild with a Champagne brunch, foraging all matters of treats for the bride-to-be. Voted in the top 10 foodie hen parties by One Fab Day.

Blackstairs Ecotrails is just one of 11 recipients of a Gold Standard by Eco Tourism Ireland.



Address: The Old Rectory, Killedmond, Borris, Co. Carlow

Contact: Robert and Mary White

t: +353 (0)59 977 3184 m: +353 (0)87 270 7189
e: blackstairsecotrails@gmail.com
w: www.blackstairsecotrails.ie



Facilities: Boot room, bathroom, wet room with disabled access, kitchen, a demonstration island unit and a large meeting area.

How to find us: Exit at Junction 6 on the M9. Follow signs from Leighlinbridge and from there for Bagenalstown. In Bagenalstown take the R705 for Borris. In Borris turn left and continue through the town and turn left under the old arched railway bridge (L3006). Situated on the left hand side amongst trees after 5.4km.

GPS: 52.612718, -6.8555203



wildways adventures

Explore the peace and tranquillity of the Barrow Way at a leisurely pace with Una Halpin from Wildways Adventures. With low-lying level paths and flat terrain, it's easy to focus on the natural beauty of your surroundings. Immerse yourself in nature and learn to notice and appreciate the beauty in simple, everyday natural wonders.



Photo © Boris House



Address: Along the River Barrow

t: +353 (0)87 412 5649

e: info@wildwaysadventures.ie

w: www.wildwaysadventures.ie

How to find us: Wildways Adventures conduct guided group tours at various locations along the River Barrow.

Open: Contact us for group bookings. Tailored walking packages to suit the ages, abilities and interests of your group



Whether it's the range of wild spring flowers peppering the grass verges, the flight of bumblebees, butterflies and dragonflies in summer, or the beautiful colours of autumn leaves and fruits, there is something to enjoy in all seasons.

Una will lead your family or group along the Barrow Way for a short stroll of an hour or two or for a longer adventure. With a combination of stories, facts and personal observations, the walk takes the form of a roving conversation. Una will move among the group to answer questions and point out plants, trees, insect life, and landscape features and discuss the natural and built heritage of the riverside and the lateral canals and locks.

For younger groups and families with children, an extra fun element can be added with children hunting for particular leaves and flowers or using nets and collecting jars to gather live insects and spiders for closer observation. Walks can be tailored to fit with any activity itinerary with locations, times and duration designed to work with your plans. Suitable for organised groups including youth groups, adult groups, and groups of families.

Leave the modern world behind as you tune into the birdsong and the slow peaceful flow of the River Barrow.

introduction to barrow, south leinster and wicklow ways

Carlow is a treasure trove of walking routes catering for everyone from the casual walker to the veteran hiker. Looped walks are located throughout the county, with flat walking available along the beautiful Barrow Way and hiking for the more adventurous along the scenic South Leinster and Wicklow Ways. The 114km-long Barrow Way starts in County Kildare and follows the towpath and riverside roads to the beautiful monastic village of St. Mullins in South Carlow. Enjoy the surrounding landscape, scenic mountains, and a rich expanse of woodlands.

The South Leinster Way runs from Kildavin in East Carlow as far as Carrick-on-Suir in County Tipperary. It features the majestic Mount Leinster, the highest hill in the Blackstairs Mountains (795m), and stunning views of Brandon Hill and the Barrow Valley. From Kildavin to Borris and onwards to Graiguenamanagh, the route is rich in flora and fauna.

The Wicklow Way ends in the Carlow village of Clonegal. En route, it passes mountain lakes, rolling countryside, and the beautiful Glendalough Valley. From Clonegal, the South Leinster Way is a short distance of 3km from its start in nearby Kildavin.

Carlow is an ideal gateway to these wonderful walks, located in the sunny South East and just an hour from Dublin. Excellent public transport means you can hop on a train or bus, walk along the Barrow Way to your chosen destination and then avail of public transport to return. The Barrow Way features a series of locks, some of which offer direct road access. These locks are denoted with a symbol on the maps on the following pages.

If you're seeking peace, tranquillity, fresh air, and harmony with nature, then Carlow's charming walks await you. Fun, adventure, or quiet reflection – you choose. We have it all and, it's all FREE of charge.



Walking in the Blackstairs Mountains during Carlow's Autumn Walking Festival

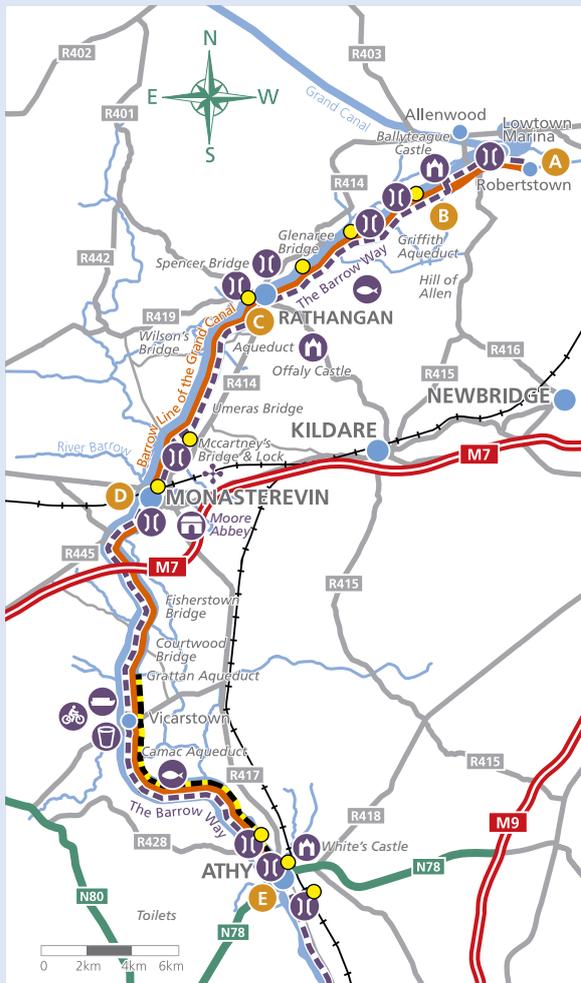
Post Office	Public House	Train Station	Fishing	Castle	Playground
Barge Hire	Restaurant/Café	Stately Home	Picnic Area	ATM	Bike Hire
Bus Stop	Canal Lock	Gardens	Scenic Walk	Canoeing	Heritage Site
Shop	Church	Forest Walk	Garden Centre	Accommodation	
The Barrow Way	Kilbrannish Forest Loop Walk	Car Park	Road access	Viewpoint	
Barrow Line of the Grand Canal	Windfarm Loop	Road access point	Graveyard		
South Leinster Way	Clashganny Forest Loop Walk				

principles



- Plan ahead and prepare
- Be considerate of others
- Respect farm animals and wildlife
- Travel and camp on durable ground
- Leave what you find
- Dispose of waste properly
- Minimise the effects of fire

Practising a 'Leave no Trace' ethic is very simple. Make it hard for others to see or hear you and leave no trace of your visit.



the barrow way

The River Barrow was made navigable in the 18th century by the insertion of short sections of canal along its course with a towpath constructed to allow horses pull barges and goods. A commercial waterway until the early 1960s, the towpath is now used purely for leisure purposes. Visitors can enjoy excellent flat walking, passing good land where tillage and cattle farming is predominant. The path offers much of architectural interest – bridges, many arched, and pretty lock houses, some still in use, together with stunning examples of industrial heritage. Accommodation is available at regular intervals.

- A-B** Starting at the popular village and moorings at Robertstown, the Barrow Way follows the north side of the Grand Canal for a short distance. Cross the Grand Canal bridge at the lock in Lowtown, turn left and follow the Barrow Way signs along the right bank of the canal.
- B-C** Shortly after passing a canal junction, reach and cross the canal bridge opposite Ballyteague Castle and now follow the towpath on the south or left side of the Barrow Line canal. The Hill of Allen lies to the east en route to Rathangan 15km from the start.
- C-D** Continue on the left bank from Rathangan. The remnants of a peat factory quay are passed at Umeras before reaching the whitewashed cottages by Macartney's Bridge and Lock. Monasterevin is reached after 24km.
- D-E** After Monasterevin switch to the right side of the canal and continue for a further 23km to Athy.

Trailhead: Robertstown

Services: See below and map

Distance/Time: 47km (12 hours) – more easily managed in two sections from Robertstown to Monasterevin (24km) and from there to Athy (23km)

Difficulty: Easy

Terrain: Road, track and river towpath

To suit: Beginner or experienced walkers

Minimum gear: Suitable walking footwear, rain gear, fluids, snacks and mobile phone.

OSI map: No. 49 and 55 www.osi.ie

Type of trail: National Way Marked Trail – yellow arrow on black background.

Emergency services: 999 or 112

Robertstown



Rathangan



Monasterevin



Athy



the barrow way

- E-F** Athy has been an important crossing point of the River Barrow from early times and the town developed about 800 years ago around this ford and later bridge. A little below Athy, the Barrow Line canal joins the River Barrow properly and the Barrow Way runs on the left or east towpath of the river below this point.
- F-G** The River Barrow was used by shallow boats called cots for many centuries but in order to make the River Barrow navigable by larger boats, it was necessary in the 18th century to construct short canals or cuts to bypass steeper or rocky sections of the river. The Levitstown Cut is the first such canal the visitor meets and the longest at 3km+, it rejoins the River Barrow at Levitstown Lock, House and Mill. Each canal or cut has an associated lock to manage the fall or rise in river level. Levitstown Mill produced malted barley until it was closed by a fire in 1943. The malt was transported by barge to Dublin and the Guinness brewery. It is now used for generating electricity.
- G-H** The fine cut stone bridge of Maganey is passed halfway between Athy and Carlow. Just south of Maganey on the west bank is the site of Grange Castle while the 16th century Shrule Castle lies a little below this. As you approach Carlow town, the site of Carlow Sugar Factory is passed on the left. This was a hive of activity, particularly in autumn and winter months from 1926 to its closure in 2007. It made good use of the river navigation and a small harbour was constructed for the loading and unloading of boats at the time.

Trailhead: Athy

Services: See below and map

Distance/Time: 20km (5 hours)

Difficulty: Easy

Terrain: Road, track and river towpath

To suit: Beginner or experienced walkers

Minimum gear: Suitable walking footwear, rain gear, fluids, snacks and mobile phone.

OSI map: No. 55 and 61 www.osi.ie

Type of trail: National Way Marked Trail
– yellow arrow on black background

Emergency services: 999 or 112

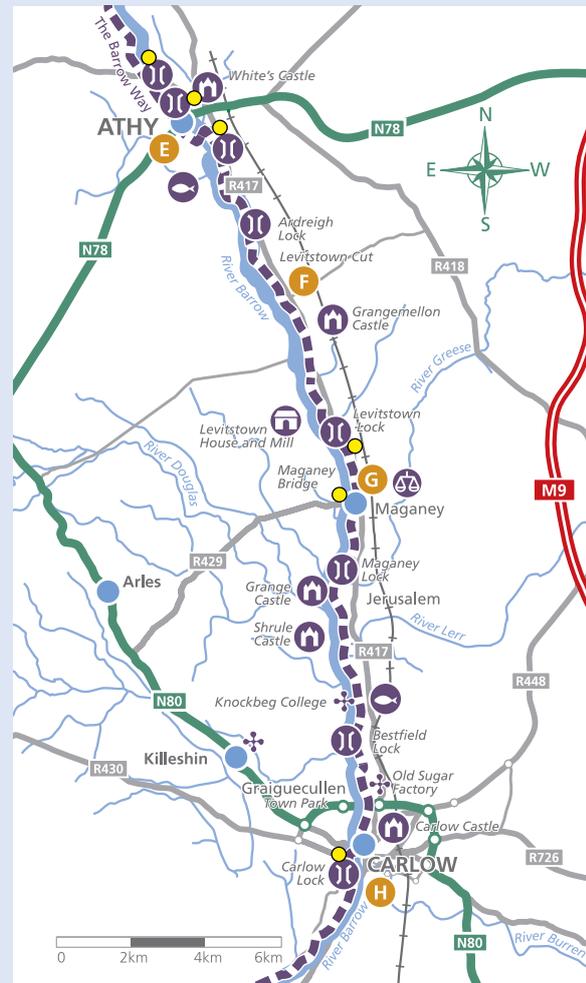
Athy

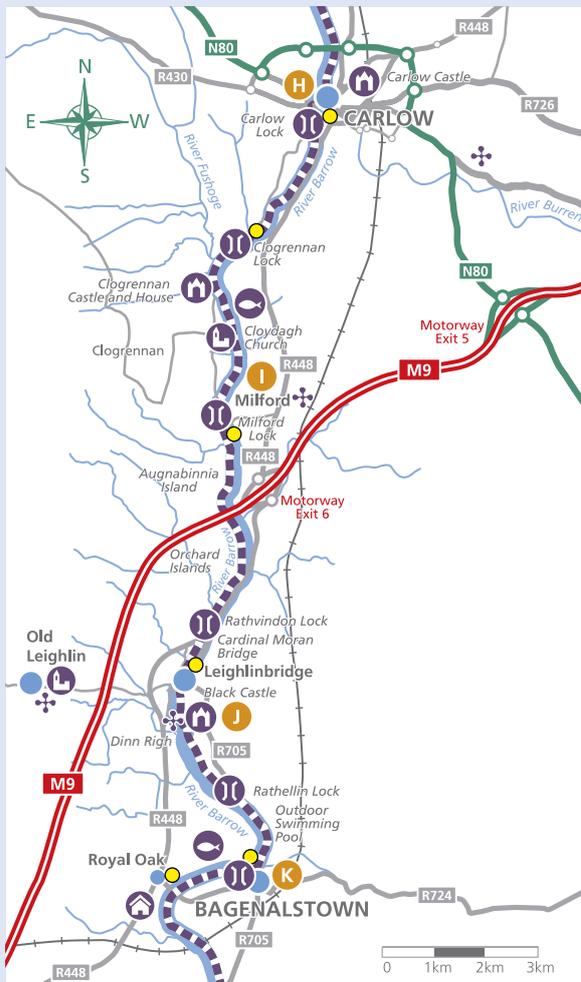


Carlow town



athy - carlow





the barrow way

- H-I** From Carlow the Barrow Way switches to the right or west bank of the River Barrow at Wellington or Graiguecullen Bridge. The 13th century Carlow Castle which protected the river crossing and around which Carlow town developed, is well worth a visit. The landscape changes south of Carlow town, flat plains are replaced by hills on either side with wooded valleys. The Castlecomer Plateau rises up on the west side. Below Carlow, the ruins of Clogrennan Castle and Clogrennan House, seat of the Rochforts can be seen on the right or west bank.
- I-J** Milford is a pleasant spot on the River Barrow and is particularly rich in plant and bird life – spot the herons, kingfishers and swallows among the many species of birds. The ruins of Milford Mill (1790-1965), established by the Alexander family are nearby and were once the site of a busy flour, malting and tannery business. In the 1890s the present day mill was used as a generating station for electricity with Carlow the first inland town in Ireland and the UK to have electric street lighting.
- J-K** Leighlinbridge is another old town built on a crossing point which was guarded by the Black Castle. The bridge at Leighlinbridge, built in 1320, is the oldest on the River Barrow. The Way now switches to the left bank and as you leave the village behind, the ancient site of Dinn Righ lies up on your right, said to be a fort of one of the former Kings of Leinster. Bagenalstown is reached shortly after passing the outdoor swimming pool. In modern times the village has won numerous awards in the Tidy Towns competition.

Trailhead: Carlow

Services: See below and map

Distance/Time: 18km (5 hours)

Difficulty: Easy

Terrain: Road, track and river towpath

To suit: Beginner or experienced walkers

Minimum gear: Suitable walking footwear, rain gear, fluids, snacks and mobile phone.

OSI map: No. 61 www.osi.ie

Type of trail: National Way Marked Trail – yellow arrow on black background.

Emergency services: 999 or 112

Carlow town



Leighlinbridge



Bagenalstown



the barrow way

K-L A small village called Muine Bheag existed here in the Middle Ages but in the 18th century Walter Bagenal designed a new town, supposedly based on Versailles of France and called it Bagenalstown. Pleasing features of this period include the impressive courthouse, now a public library and a fine neo-classical railway station.

L-M Goresbridge named after Colonel Gore was built in 1756 and features a beautifully maintained picnic area and riverside park. Ballytiglea Lock and then Bridge is reached where you may exit if you wish to visit Borris. Borris is a Georgian, granite village, full of charm and heritage whose houses and Victorian shop fronts have remained largely intact. There is a wonderful 3.5km walk around and under the old Railway Viaduct at the end of the village, offering superb views to the Blackstairs Mountains and Mount Leinster. A dedicated car park and picnic area have been developed at the site.

M-N Continue on the towpath, with the wooded estate of Borris House on your left. Clashganny Lock and weir is reached some 6kms from Borris and is a popular beauty and picnic spot with wonderful walks through Clashganny Forest (see next pages). Approaching Graiguenamanagh the river begins to cut its way between the hills with attractive tree-lined slopes.

Trailhead: Bagenalstown

Services: See below and map

Distance/Time: 26km (7 hours)

Difficulty: Easy

Terrain: Road, track and river towpath

To suit: Beginner or experienced walkers

Minimum gear: Suitable walking footwear, rain gear, fluids, snacks and mobile phone.

OSI map: No. 61 & 68 www.osi.ie and the *Blackstairs, Mount Leinster and Barrow Valley* by East West Mapping www.eastwestmapping.ie

Type of trail: National Way Marked Trail – yellow arrow on black background.

Emergency services: 999 or 112

Bagenalstown



Goresbridge



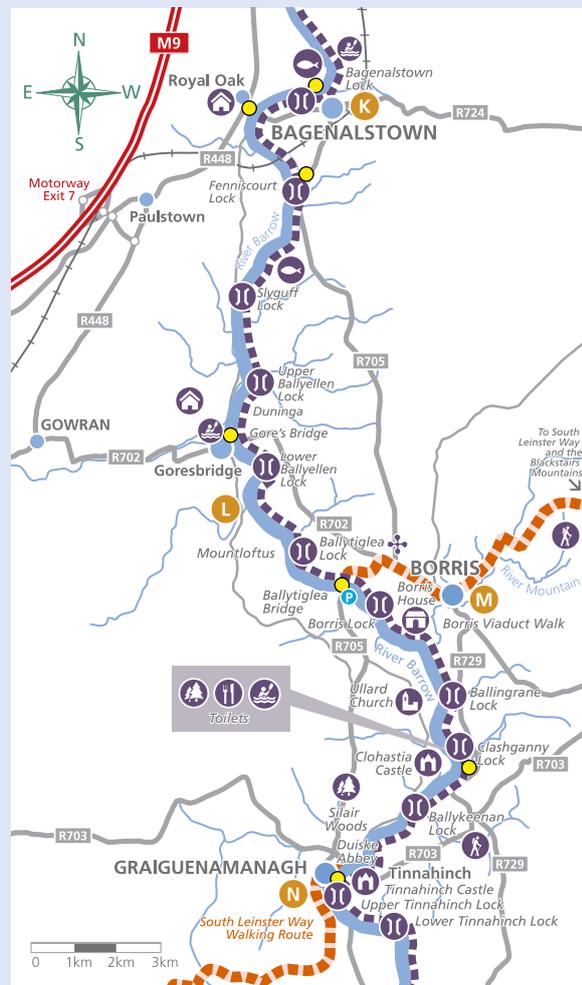
Borris



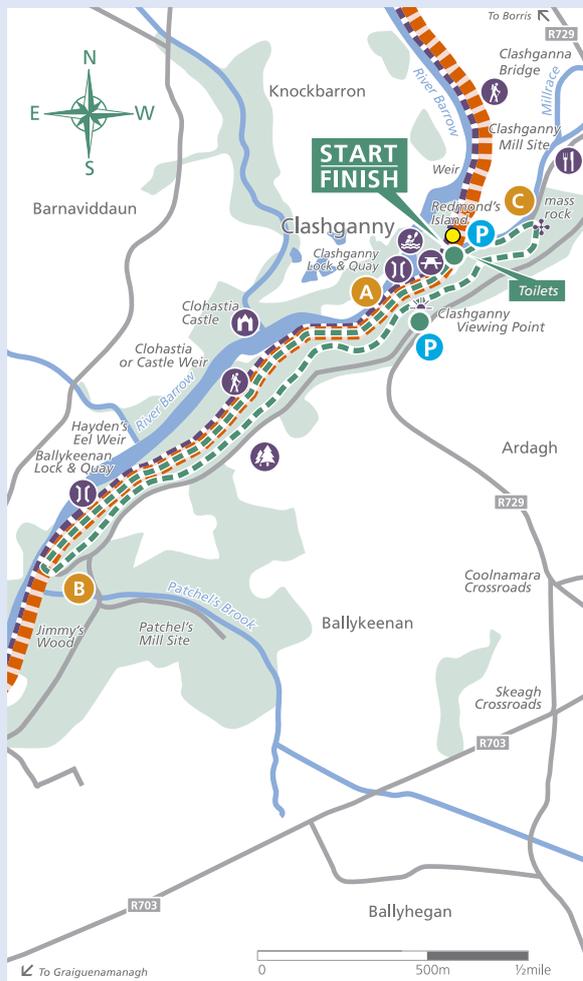
Graiguenamannagh/Tinnahinch



bagenalstown - graiguenamanagh



clashganny lock loop



clashganny forest looped walks

Clashganny Forest Trails offer the user gentle walks on forest roads and along the Barrow Way with magnificent views of Clashganny Lock and the River Barrow. Much of the walk is through an old wood and has had forestry cover present since the 1800s.

clashganny lock loop

- A-B** This walk is signposted by green arrows. Walk from the Clashganny Lock car park towards the River Barrow and keep left, following the river downstream. The old towpath that you are following is wide and easy to follow and is marked by both green (this walk) and yellow (Barrow Way) arrows. After a short distance, follow the canal until you reach Ballykeenan Lock.
- B-C** Shortly after this, follow the green arrow and take a sharp left back uphill on a forest road. After 50m follow the green arrow to turn left again onto the narrow forest track. This delightful forest path, rugged in places, runs through deciduous woodland with glimpses to the river below. It will take you on a parallel line back upriver. Near the end, the path descends by an old mass rock and joins the tarmac road below.
- C-A** Turn left to return the short distance to the car park.

Trailhead: Clashganny car park

Services: Toilets, nearby restaurant. Borris 4km.

Distance/Time: 3.5 kilometres (1½ hours)

Difficulty: Easy

Terrain: Road, track and river towpath

To suit: Beginner or experienced walkers, only suitable for buggies in part, special care to be taken of children near deep water

Minimum gear: Suitable walking footwear, rain gear, fluids, snacks and mobile phone

Type of trail: Local looped walk – marked with green arrows

Emergency Services: 999 or 112

clashganny forest looped walks

The name Clashganny comes from the Irish, Clais Ghainimh – meaning ‘the sandy river trench’. Along this route the walker will encounter secluded forest trails with some historic land marks including a mass rock. The walker will also experience native flora and fauna to be found along the banks of the River Barrow.

clashganny viewing point loop

- A-B** The walk is signposted with purple arrows. Walk downhill from the car park, following a forest track. This track descends for a kilometre, reach a Y-junction where you veer right and downhill towards the River Barrow.
- B-C** After a short distance, follow the purple arrow and take a right turn onto a narrow forest path. This delightful rugged path, narrow in places, runs through deciduous woodland with glimpses of the river below. After 2km, the path descends by an old mass rock and joins the tarmac road below.
- C-D** Turn left now and follow the road down to the main Clashganny car park and the river. Walk through the car park and follow the river downstream. The old towpath that you are following is wide and easy to follow and is marked by both purple (this walk) and yellow (Barrow Way) arrows. After a short distance, you will reach Ballykeenan Lock, where the canal re-enters the river.
- D-A** Shortly after this, follow the purple arrow to turn sharp left and back uphill on a forest track. You now rejoin your earlier route and follow the forest track back uphill to the Clashganny Viewing Point car park.

Trailhead: Clashganny Viewing Point car park

Services: Toilets, nearby restaurant. Borris 4km.

Distance/Time: 6 kilometres (2 hours)

Difficulty: Easy

Terrain: Road, track and river towpath

To suit: Beginner or experienced walkers, only suitable for buggies in part, special care to be taken of children near deep water

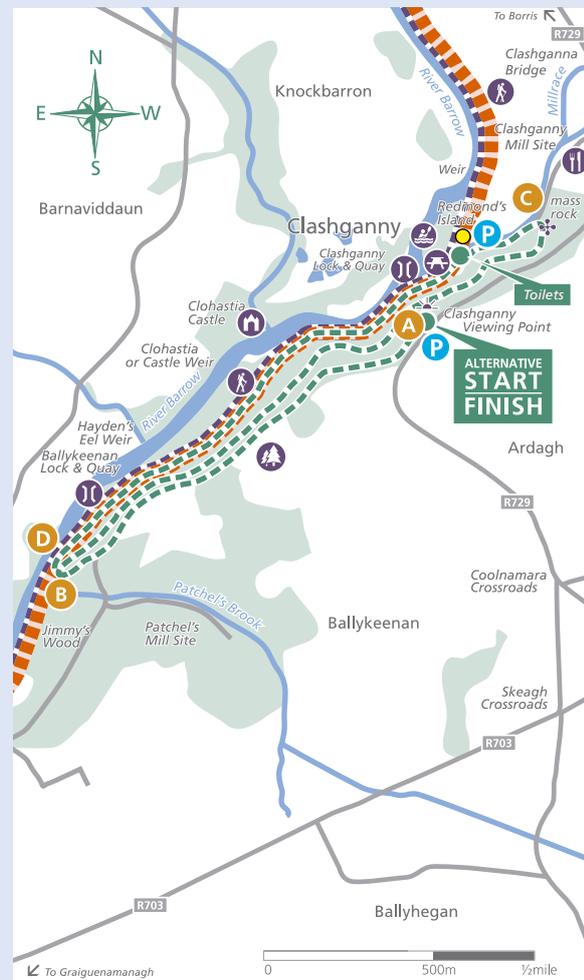
Minimum gear: Suitable walking footwear, rain gear, fluids, snacks and mobile phone

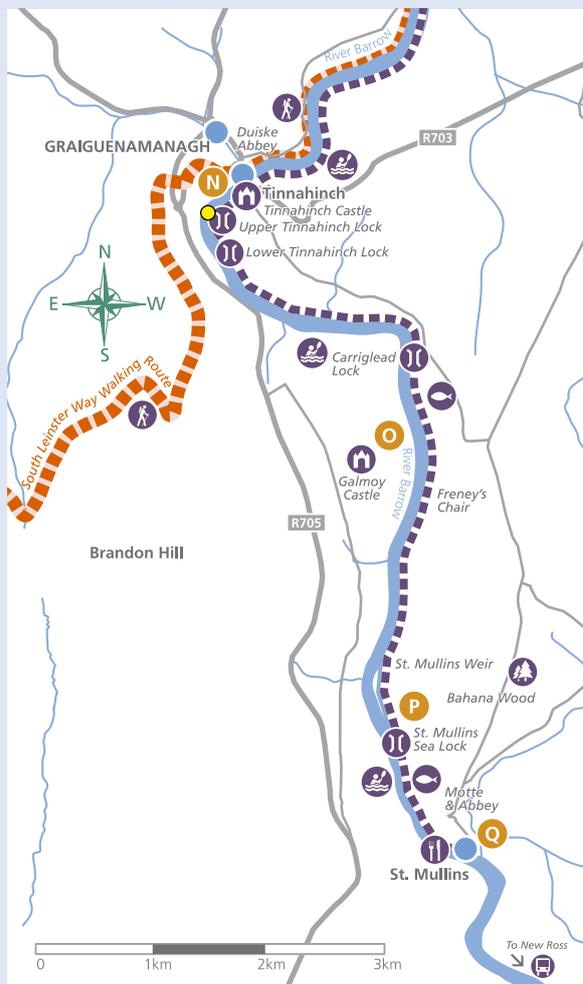
Type of trail: Local loop walk – marked with purple arrows

Emergency Services: 999 or 112

clashganny viewing point loop

21





the barrow way

- N** Graiguenamanagh is a busy town and a very popular mooring place on the River Barrow. It was once the hub of the barge transport business and many families plied that trade. Rail and road transport eventually replaced the barges, last used in 1959. As you leave the town you pass Tinnahinch Castle, a Butler stronghold built to defend the ford.
- O** This section may be short but it is full of beauty and drama with frequent weirs and the lofty Brandon Hill rising up to your right. It is popular with both walkers and people travelling the river by boat, Canadian canoe or kayak.
- P** Soon you reach the mighty St. Mullins Weir, this and the following Sea Lock separate the tidal part of the River Barrow from the upper reaches that you have just followed. Below the Sea Lock boats must wait at St. Mullins for the rising tide to start on their journey to New Ross and the sea.
- Q** St. Mullins village is the start/finishing point of the Barrow Way. Leaving the quay and mill buildings behind, you soon reach the Norman Motte which is a high, man-made hill fortification. Opposite this are the ruins of the ancient Tigh Moling, the house of Moling, an early Christian missionary in Ireland who founded a monastery here in the 7th century. St. Mullins is one of the country's most significant archaeological and ecclesiastical sites, ranking in importance with Glendalough and Clonmacnoise.

Trailhead: Graiguenamanagh

Services: See below and map

Distance/Time: 8 kilometres, 2-3 hours

Difficulty: Easy

Terrain: Road, track and river towpath

To suit: Beginner or experienced walkers

Minimum gear: Suitable walking footwear, rain gear, fluids, snacks and mobile phone.

OSI map: No. 68 www.osi.ie and the *Blackstairs, Mount Leinster and Barrow Valley*

Type of trail: National Way Marked Trail – yellow arrow on black background

Emergency services: 999 or 112

Graiguenamanagh/Tinnahinch



St. Mullins



kildavin - nine stones

Trailhead: Kildavin

Services: See below and map

Distance/Time: 11.6km (approx. 4 hrs)

Difficulty: Hard

Terrain: Minor roadways, forestry tracks and hillside paths

Ascent: 475 metres

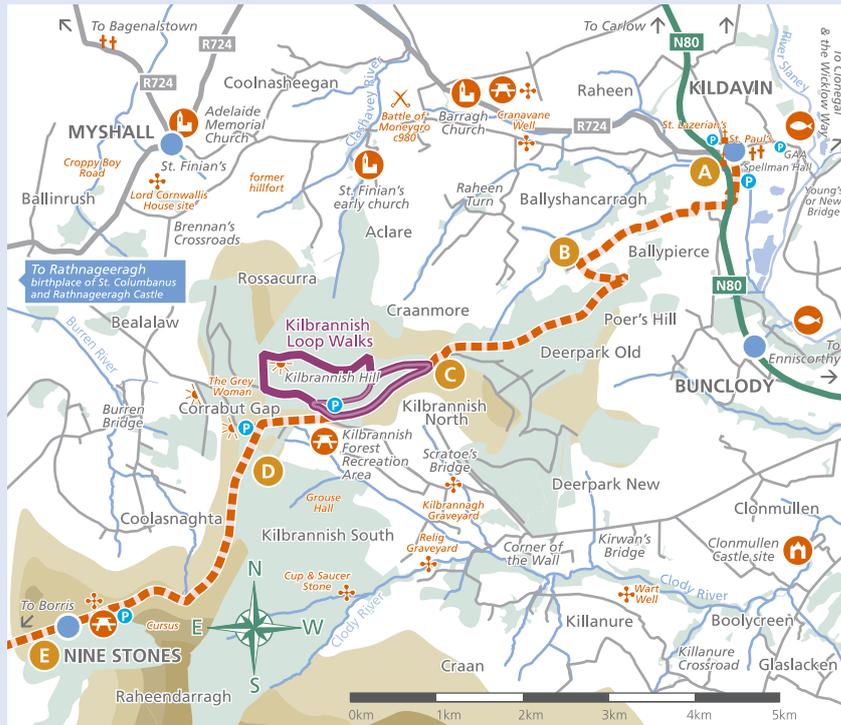
To suit: Experienced walkers

Minimum gear: Hiking boots, rain gear, fluids, snacks and mobile phone.

OSI maps: OSI Discovery Series 68, 75 and 76 www.osi.ie and the *Blackstairs, Mount Leinster and the Barrow Valley* by East West Mapping.

Type of trail: National Way Marked Trail – yellow arrow on black background.

Emergency services: 999 or 112



south leinster way

23

The South Leinster Way is a long distance walking route which runs from Kildavin in the east of County Carlow to Carrick-on-Suir in County Tipperary, some 102km in length. Further details at www.irishtrails.ie

A-B From the trailhead beside Conway's Pub, follow the footpath south gently uphill towards Bunclody. After 500m, reach the main road and turn right to follow it for a short distance. Cross the main road to gain a minor tarmac road on the far side. Follow this for 2km as it climbs uphill.

B-C Reach Mount Leinster Cottages and turn left and steeply uphill on a rough unsurfaced track to enter a forest. Follow the forest road uphill to reach a junction after 500m. Turn right and follow the forest road as it climbs more gently along the slopes of the forested hillside. After 2.5km reach the crest of the hill and a short gap between two forests, that yields good views.

C-D From the crest of the hill, continue on downhill, passing a right turn after a short distance. There are signposted loop trails here, so take care to follow the yellow arrows. Continue on downhill for 1.5km to reach the Kilbrannish Forest Recreation car park. Turn right and follow the tarmac road with care uphill to reach Carroll's Crossroad just before Corrabutt Gap.

D-E Turn left at Carroll's Crossroad and follow the tarmac mountain road with care. This climbs steadily with excellent views down into Coolasnaghta on your right. After 3km reach the large Nine Stones car park.

Borris

Kildavin Myshall

Bunclody

windfarm loop (short loop)

- A-B** A steep path leads up from the rear of the car park to reach a forest road. Walk uphill to the right along the forest road, passing a forest road junction to the left. The walk climbs gently uphill with occasional views to your right to farmland and the wind farm on Greenoge Hill.
- B-C** Reach a forest road junction near the top of the rise and turn left. Your road continues to climb gently to reach another junction. The surrounding coniferous forest is mainly planted with sitka spruce and lodgepole pine.
- C-A** Turn left now, leaving the Kilbrannish Forest Loop. The road soon starts to descend gently to reach a forest road junction below. Turn left again to return the short distance to the car park.

kilbrannish forest loop (long loop)

- A-B** As per the Windfarm Loop above.
- B-C** Reach a forest road junction near the top of the rise and turn left. Your road continues to climb gently to reach another junction, where you turn right, leaving the Windfarm Loop. Continue to a triangular forest road junction. Turn left again and continue uphill on a wide forest roadway to reach the summit of Croaghaun Hill. A detour to the right leads to an opening in the forest with views northwards to Myshall and beyond.
- C-A** Retrace your steps for a minute from the summit of Croaghaun and now turn right down a steep track. Enjoy the views across the valley of the River Clody and Mount Leinster. On reaching the forest road at the bottom, turn left and then right at the next junction to return to the car park.

kilbrannish forest recreation area

Trailhead: Kilbrannish Forest Recreation car park

Services: Car park, picnic area

Distance/Time: Windfarm Loop 3.1km (1 hour)
Kilbrannish Forest Loop 5.3km (1hr 40 min)

Difficulty: Easy

Terrain: Forest road, track

To suit: Beginner or experienced walkers, suitable for large wheeled buggies

Minimum gear: Suitable walking footwear, rain gear, fluids, snacks and mobile phone.

Type of trail: Local loop walk
Windfarm Loop - green arrows and
Kilbrannish Forest Loop - purple arrows

Emergency Services: 999 or 112



nine stones - borris

Trailhead: Nine Stones

Distance/Time: 10.6km (3 hours)

Difficulty: Hard

Terrain: Minor roadways, forestry tracks and hillside paths

Ascent: 20 metres

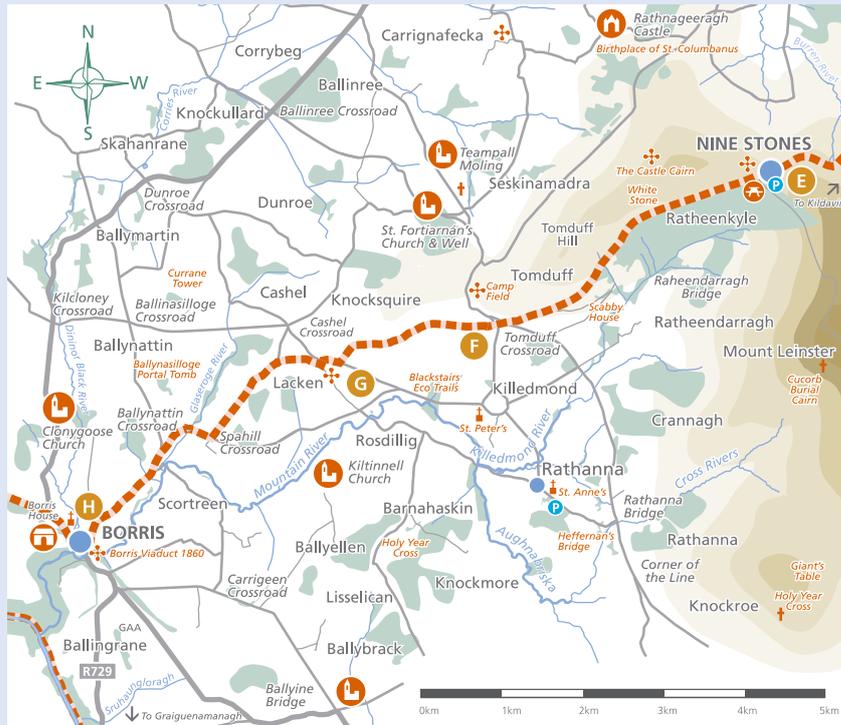
To suit: Beginner or experienced walkers

Minimum gear: Hiking boots, rain gear, fluids, snacks and mobile phone.

OSI maps: OSI Discovery Series 68, 75 and 76 and the *Blackstairs, Mount Leinster and the Barrow Valley* by East West Mapping.

Type of trail: National Way Marked Trail – yellow arrow on black background

Emergency services: 999 or 112



south leinster way

25

E-F The Nine Stones Viewing Point provides an unrivalled vista of the rich and colourful Carlow countryside. Eight counties can be viewed from this spot and, on a clear day the coast of Wales. On the lower side of the road, you will see an alignment of nine small stones in the ground, said to commemorate nine shepherds lost on Mount Leinster in some distant winter storm. Continue on along the tarmac road from the Nine Stones car park which descends steadily, passing two notable landmarks: the White Stone on your right and later the Scabby House on your left just after a cattle grid. Reach Tomduff Crossroads.

F-G At Tomduff Crossroads, walk straight through two crossroad junctions. Nearby is the monument to the Tomduff Campfield, where a large force gathered in the 1798 rebellion. Continue downhill on a tarmac road to reach the T-junction of Cashel Crossroad. Turn right for a short distance and then left on a minor road.

G-H From Cashel Crossroad, the road continues to descend. Keep left at the next junction and drop downhill to reach Spahill Crossroad where you turn right. The road soon drops on the final descent to the village of Borris. There is a wonderful 3.5km walk around and under the old Railway Viaduct at the end of the village offering superb views to the Blackstairs Mountains and Mount Leinster. A dedicated car park and picnic area have been developed at the site.

Borris



Rathanna



26 south leinster way

H-I Walk uphill out of Borris on the main R702 towards Goresbridge. Historic Borris House, seat of the McMorrough Kavanaghs, former kings of Leinster is on your left.

I-J From Ballytiglea Bridge, keep left and follow the broad towpath downstream with the River Barrow on your right. A little further on the Mountain River rushes in from your left and later you pass Ballingrane Lock. As you approach the scenic Clashganny Lock you will hear the roar of falling water from the adjacent weir.

J-K Continue on the towpath from Clashganny, the ruins of Clohastia Castle lie to the right, one of many Norman castles built to control navigation and crossing of the River Barrow. Reach Ballykeenan Lock and continue on following the yellow arrows, ignoring the local loop walks that turn left here. The wooded valley sides steepen on the next stretch and after a final sweeping bend, the historic town of Graiguenamanagh comes into view, with wooded barges along granite quays and impressive old store houses. One of Ireland's finest Cistercian monasteries, Duiske Abbey, was founded here in 1204 by Norman monks from Stanley Abbey in Wiltshire.

Borris



Graiguenamannagh/

Tinnahinch



Ballymurphy



borris - graiguenamanagh

Trailhead: Borris

Distance/Time: 13.1km (3 hours)

Difficulty: Easy

Terrain: Minor roadways, forestry tracks and hillside paths

Ascent: 60 metres

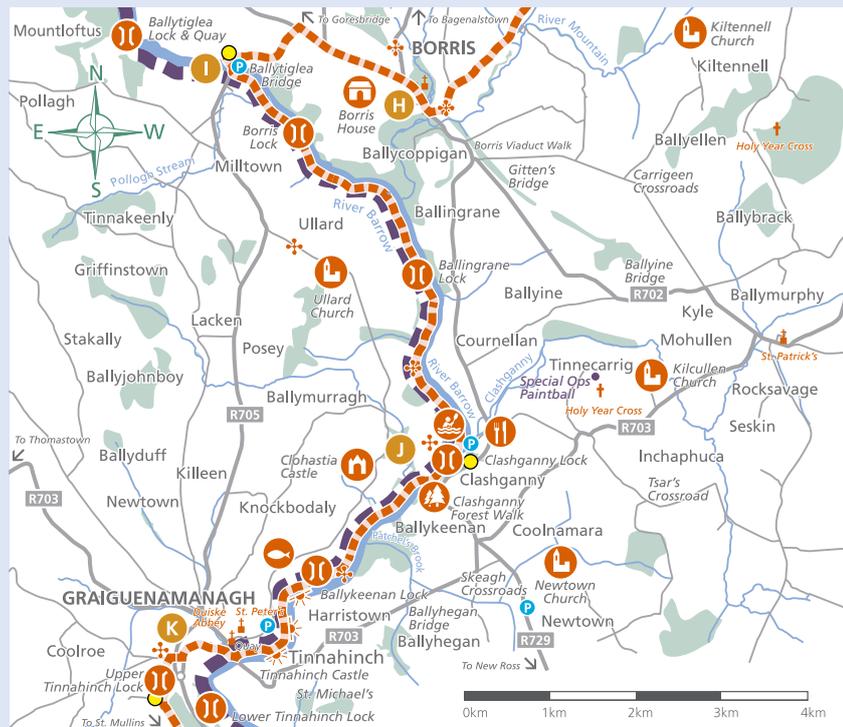
To suit: Beginner or experienced walkers

Minimum gear: Hiking boots, rain gear, fluids, snacks and mobile phone.

OSI maps: OSI Discovery Series 68, 75 and 76 and the *Blackstairs, Mount Leinster and the Barrow Valley* from East West Mapping.

Type of trail: National Way Marked Trail – yellow arrow on black background

Emergency services: 999 or 112



Carlow has a long tradition of food production. The Carlow Food Trail catalogues the varied selection throughout the county. Artisan producers are flourishing, with award winning farmhouse cheeses, seasonal fruit and free range, organic meats available from farmers' markets and farm shops. Restaurants include fine dining establishments, modern Irish cuisine and the best of traditional cooking, who all take pride in supporting Carlow suppliers by showcasing fresh, seasonal and local food on their menus. For any lover of good food, the Carlow Food Trail is an experience not to be missed.



for further information
contact carlow tourism

tel: +353 (0) 59 913 0411

email: info@carlowtourism.com
www.carlowtourism.com



- 4 star Fáilte Ireland approved accommodation;
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Orchard Grove, Wells, Bagenalstown, Co. Carlow

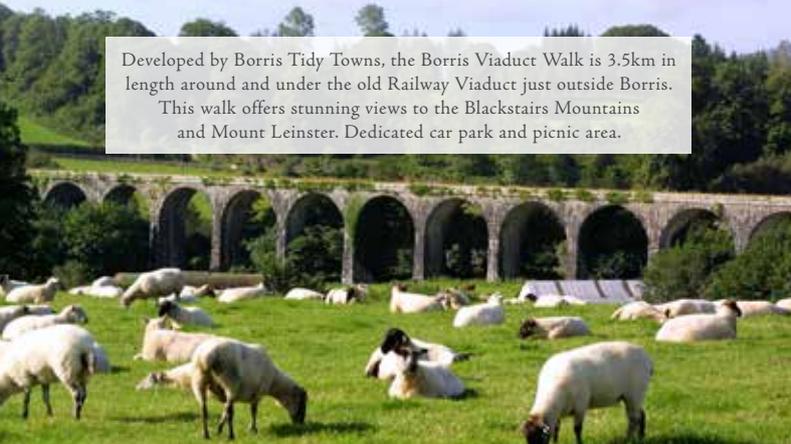
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The Borris Viaduct Walk

Hegarty's Bridge | Kilcoltrim | Borris | Co. Carlow

Developed by Borris Tidy Towns, the Borris Viaduct Walk is 3.5km in length around and under the old Railway Viaduct just outside Borris.

This walk offers stunning views to the Blackstairs Mountains and Mount Leinster. Dedicated car park and picnic area.



VISITOR INFORMATION POINT

at the CRISP Centre, The Old Schoolhouse, Lower Main Street, Borris, Co. Carlow

- Tourism Brochures
- Links to Local Approved Accommodation
- Internet Access for Visitors
- Boarding Passes and Document Printing
- Scanning and Faxing Service



CRISP Centre, The Old Schoolhouse, Lower Main Street, Borris, Co. Carlow

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	<i>Closed Christmas Day</i>
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KILKENNY CASTLE

EVERY FRIDAY 9.30am-1.30pm

IN BORRIS TOWN HALL IN THE CENTRE OF THE VILLAGE

BORRIS FOOD & CRAFT MARKET



This food and craft market is situated in the picturesque village of Borris in South County Carlow and is run by a group of food producers and artisans from the village and surrounding countryside. Fresh organically grown veg, locally sourced fish, artisan breads, cakes and biscuits, pates and pestos, locally produced farmhouse cheeses and butter all feature, plus lots of more homemade or homegrown by market members. The market features superb craft workers and high quality crafts including woodturning, jewellery making, felting, knitwear and painting.

Avlon House Bed and Breakfast

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MOUNT WOLSELEY

HOTEL, SPA & GOLF RESORT



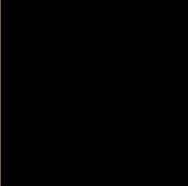
Mount Wolseley Hotel, Spa & Golf Resort is perfectly located for that well deserved break. From the grand staircase, sparkling chandeliers and glistening Italian marble floors, this magnificent hotel was designed for luxury. Reinvigorate your spirit in the Wolseley Spa, test your skills on the championship golf course or simply spend a leisurely afternoon curled up with a good book in your spacious bedroom. The deluxe bedrooms and suites at Mount Wolseley are spacious, airy and well appointed offering views over the countryside.

Prepare to be pampered, re-awaken your senses, free yourself from the pressures of life and experience the Wolseley Spa, illuminated only by candlelight. Calming music and the world's finest Elemis beauty products await you. The relaxing environment coupled with the extensive luxurious facilities enable this regal property to offer the complete experience to our guests.



Clashganny House Restaurant

Country House Restaurant, set in an 1840 mill-house, focusing on local artisan produce where possible.



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"The rural idyll at the edge of town"



south carlow

adventure trail

Photos below left to right: Canoeing on the River Barrow; the Barrow Way at Rathellin Lock, Co. Carlow; Larry's Barge cruising the River Barrow; Coarse angling on the River Barrow ©Tourism Ireland; Bike on the Blackstairs Mountains at sunset ©Michael Legris/The Irish Scene



Visit us online at: www.carlowtourism.com

For further information on County Carlow or to make an accommodation booking please contact:

Carlow Tourist Office, College Street, Carlow

t: +353 (0)59 913 0411 e: info@carlowtourism.com

or CRISP Centre, The Old Schoolhouse, Lower Main Street, Borris, Co. Carlow

t: +353 (0)59 977 1899 www.borris.ie

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