

# THE SPERRINS

## Unlock a Giant Adventure

### SCENIC DRIVING ROUTES

Northern  
Ireland  
Embrace  
a Giant  
Spirit



  
SPERRINS PARTNERSHIP

Some places you visit, others you experience





# Adventure slowly - be part of the journey

The Sperrins - an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty - are Northern Ireland's most extensive mountain range and can be explored via a series of scenic driving routes.

There are four scenic driving routes to choose from: **North**, **Central**, **East** and **South**. Each route represents an opportunity to become immersed in an environment millions of years in the making and steeped in myth and legend.

- **North:** 50 miles/80km
- **Central:** 90 miles/145km
- **East:** 63 miles/101km
- **South:** 64 miles/103km



Front Cover: At Barnes, Co. Tyrone

Inside Front Cover: Ulster American Folk Park, Co. Tyrone

Back Cover (Left to Right): Garvagh Forest and pyramid • Foraging in the Glenelly Valley • Moydamlaght Forest • Beaghmore Stone Circles



# Special and different from anywhere else

The great outdoors is truly great in the Sperrins and we've got lots of new, exciting ways for you to enjoy your visit here and make it an experience to remember. If you are seeking adventure or would simply like to revive your spirits, reconnect with nature and chill, you have come to the right place.



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## Our Giant Experiences

### A Taste of The Sperrins

- Ceili & Craic at the Ponderosa
- Digging for Bread & Gin
- Foodie Cycle Tour
- Wee Buns Cookery School
- Wild Atlantic Distillery Tours

### A Landscape that Inspires

- Folkways & Ritual Landscapes
- Giant's Eye View
- Seamus Heaney Homeplace
- Stars & Stones

### Past and Present

- Discover Beaghmore
- Historic Hill of the O'Neill
- Unlock The City Walls
- Lough Neagh Fishing Experience
- Sheepdogs at Work

### Coming Soon

The Giants Of The Sperrins: The Guardian,  
The Stargazer and The Storytellers

## For further information

### Cookstown Visitor Information Centre

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Check out the **Giant Spirit Experience Collection** online:  
[www.discovernorthernireland.com](http://www.discovernorthernireland.com)

# North Sperrins

## 1 GARVAGH

Garvagh was destroyed by fire during the Battle of Garvagh in 1641. Today it is a thriving rural market town. Of interest are Garvagh Museum, the stone clock tower and nearby Garvagh forest. The forest contains a range of waymarked walking, cycling and mountain bike trails and its very own pyramid.



## 2 LEGAVANNON POT

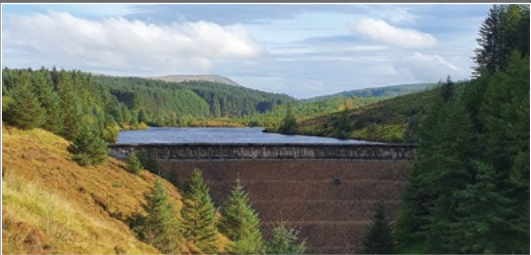
'Hollow of the Soul' - a spectacular melt water channel between Garvagh and Dungiven.

## 3 DUNGIVEN

The market town of Dungiven (meaning Given's Fort) lies nine miles south of Limavady near the foot of Benbradagh Mountain. Dungiven provides visitors with a range of locally owned shops on its Main Street and contains historic features such as Dungiven Priory and Castle. The area is also steeped in myth and legend - a rich cultural heritage reflected in a series of contemporary sculptures, two of which - 'Finvola, Gem of The Roe' and the 'O Cahan Harp' - can be found here. A third sculpture, 'The Last Serpent In Ireland' is also situated nearby at Feeny picnic site.

## 4 BANAGHER OLD CHURCH

An impressive ruin, Banagher Church is thought to date from the late 11th or early 12th Century. It is believed that the date 474 carved on the west door was done in the 18th Century. Nearby, the small tomb of St Muiredach O'Heney can be seen.



## 5 BANAGHER GLEN

Banagher Glen, approximately 3 miles south west of Dungiven, hosts one of the oldest ancient oak woodlands in Ireland. Accessed from the B74, it offers a beautiful 3 mile walk through the steep wooded glen to Altnaheglish Reservoir and Banagher Dam. It is also designated as a Nature Reserve and Special Area of Conservation.

## 6 MOYDAMLAGHT FOREST - EAGLE'S ROCK TRAIL

A 6.3 KM circular route, following a gravel forest trail through conifer and native woodland. Mostly uphill, peaking beside the impressive rock face of Craig-na-shoke. Amazing views from the top.







**7 MAGHERA WALLED GARDEN & ST. LURACH'S CHURCH**

Maghera Walled Garden, a restored Victorian garden on the grounds of a medieval 4th Century royal dwelling and ancient monastery. Adjacent is the remains of St. Lurach's Church. St. Lurach, the patron saint of Maghera, established the monastery when he was converted to Christianity by St. Patrick. Within the ruins of the church is a significant 12th century Romanesque lintel which is one of the most detailed stone carved crucifixion scenes in early Irish art.

**8 TIRKANE SWEATHOUSE**

A rectangular structure built against the side of a hill with a roof of flat stones and chimney hole in one corner. According to the 'Ancient Monuments of Ireland, Vol. 2' sweat houses are the primitive forerunner of the modern Turkish bath, which are known in Germany as Irish baths.



**9 TIRNONEY DOLMEN**

A prehistoric tomb of at least 4,000 - 6,000 years old. Dolmens are tomb structures with standing stones and a horizontal capstone, found in a number of places in Ireland.



**10 FRIEL'S BAR, RESTAURANT & MOTORHOME PARK**

Friel's is a 5th generation, family run bar and restaurant. Established in 1837 Friel's was a dispensary and coaching inn and during the Great Famine was used as a soup kitchen. It has the charm of an 'old man's pub' but with the buzz of weekend cocktails, family Sunday lunch and coffee catch-ups.

**11 GLENULLIN**

Having a lowland raised bog as its dominant landscape feature, the Glenullin area offers walking opportunities around Errigal Glen.

**12 ERRIGAL GLEN**

An established woodland on the banks of the Agivey River with a way marked trail and historic interest.

**13 ERRIGAL OLD CHURCH & SOUTERRAIN**

An ancient pagan ritual site, Christianised in the 7th century by St. Adamnan.



# Central Sperrins



## 1 STRABANE'S HERITAGE IN SCULPTURE

Dance with the 'Tinnies', 5 sculptural figures measuring some 18 feet in height and representing the region's rich tradition of music and dance; or spend a moment of reflection with Strabane's very own wishing pig 'Ambrose', named after a literary creation of Flann O'Brien, one of Strabane's most famous sons. Flann himself is also represented sculpturally, taking pride of place within Strabane's town centre.

## 2 FAMOUS CONNECTIONS

Among the notable persons associated with Strabane are John Dunlap, printer of 'The American Declaration of Independence'; James Wilson, grandfather of U.S. President Woodrow Wilson; Sir Guy Carleton, a Governor General of Canada; Cecil Frances Alexander of 'All Things Bright & Beautiful' fame; and Annie Maunder, an accomplished astronomer who along with her husband had the 'Maunder' moon crater named in their honour. A heritage trail of the town provides the perfect opportunity to discover more about these famous connections and Strabane's wider history.



## 3 SION MILLS VILLAGE

Once known for being the home of one of the world's leading linen producers, Sion Mills today is an idyllic tree lined village rich in industrial and architectural heritage. Discover more of Sion's wonderful history on a walking tour of the village or with a visit to the Sion Stables.

## 4 STEWART CASTLE, NEWTOWNSTEWART

This plantation building suffered severe damage during the 1641 insurrection and then in 1689 during King James' return from the Siege of Derry. A visit to the nearby medieval ruins of the stronghold of Harry Avery O'Neill is also recommended.

## 5 GORTIN LAKES

Located 3.5km south of Gortin village, these two kettle hole lakes were formed when large blocks of ice were left behind by the retreating glacier as it scraped along the Owenkillew Valley in the last Ice Age. Visitors who walk around the lakes will be rewarded with spectacular views of the high Sperrins.

## 6 THE GUARDIAN - SPERRINS SCULPTURE TRAIL

The Guardian is a 7m tall sculpture and one of three Sperrins Giants. It stands atop Mullaghcarn, designated an area of special scientific interest because of its earth science features, and unique upland habitat.







**7 LOUGHMACRORY MEGALITHIC WEDGE TOMB**  
 is a burial chamber which has a front chamber and a doorway marked by three stones. It is believed to have been constructed around 4000 years ago. Enjoy the flora and fauna of 'Loughmacrory Lakeside Walk'. This walk is set within a beautiful, unspoilt freshwater environment with changing views of the lough from around its shoreline.

**8 CARRICKMORE**  
 Carrickmore, or An Charraig Mhór which translates as 'The Big Rock', consists of 38 Townlands and is also referred to as 'Termon Rock'. Termon refers to the parish name Tearmann Mhig Oirc meaning McGurk's monastic sanctuary. This perhaps explains the religious significance of this area. Close by at the local GAA Club is the Nally Heritage Centre which houses aspects of social, economic, political, sporting, and geographical history relating to the area. A portion of the old "Nally Stand" from Croke Park, Ireland's national stadium of the GAA in Dublin, was relocated to the site in 2003.



**9 AN CREAGÁN CENTRE**  
 The centre is distinctively designed to mirror the archaeological sites of the area and gives you the opportunity to step back in time. It also houses an interpretative exhibition and offers archaeological, environmental and cultural guided tours of the surrounding area.



**10 AGHASCREBAGH 'OGHAM' STONE**  
 This is one of the very few 'ogham' stones in Northern Ireland. The marks on the edges of this stone are characters from an alphabet that was used in medieval Ireland. The 25-letter alphabet was supposedly inspired by Oghma, god of eloquence.

**11 BARNES GAP AND THE GLENELLY VALLEY**  
 Carved by the glacial flows of the Ice Age, this giant landscape features picturesque walking and cycling routes, peaceful picnic sites, and mysterious archaeological remains. On route follow the signs to find Bodoney Church, Glenroan Portal Tomb, and Clogherny Wedge Tomb, while Goles Stone Row is just over 3.5km/2 miles East of Sperrin. Near Cranagh slumbering Giants are beginning to stir.

**12 LOUGHASH WEDGE TOMB**  
 Sample something of the Sperrins' prehistoric past with a visit to this ancient burial chamber. The entrance, which faces west, has a double portal arrangement leading to a single burial chamber where it is believed 3 individuals were interred.

**13 DONEMANA /DUNAMANAGH VILLAGE**  
 A quiet country village with a tradition of sporting excellence. It nestles at the foothills of the Sperrins, among wooded hillsides and on the banks of the River Dennet, and provides an opportunity to sample something of our rural heritage.



# East Sperrins



## 1 SPRINGHILL HOUSE

Built at the end of the 17th century Springhill was the home of the Lenox-Conyngham family for nearly 300 years. In the parkland are walled gardens, way-marked paths, children's adventure trail and play park. Alongside Killymoon Castle and Lissan House, Springhill features in the 'Three Sister's Experience'.

## 2 MANOR PARK

An attractive park within the conservation village of Moneymore. There is a circular 1km walk with beautiful woodland areas, wildlife ponds, parkland and picnic area.



## 3 THE JUNGLE NI

is Northern Ireland's leading outdoor adventure activity centre and offers an exciting choice of adrenaline-packed activities, exhilarating events, onsite glamping accommodation, and conference facilities.

## 4 REUBEN'S GLEN

A 1 mile/1.6km wooded walk follows the river. The sound of wildlife and the rippling of the water creates an oasis of tranquility in the midst of an intensive farming area.

## 5 INISCARN FOREST

has a range of walks and is also the starting point for those wishing to climb the hillwalk on Slieve Gallion Mountain.

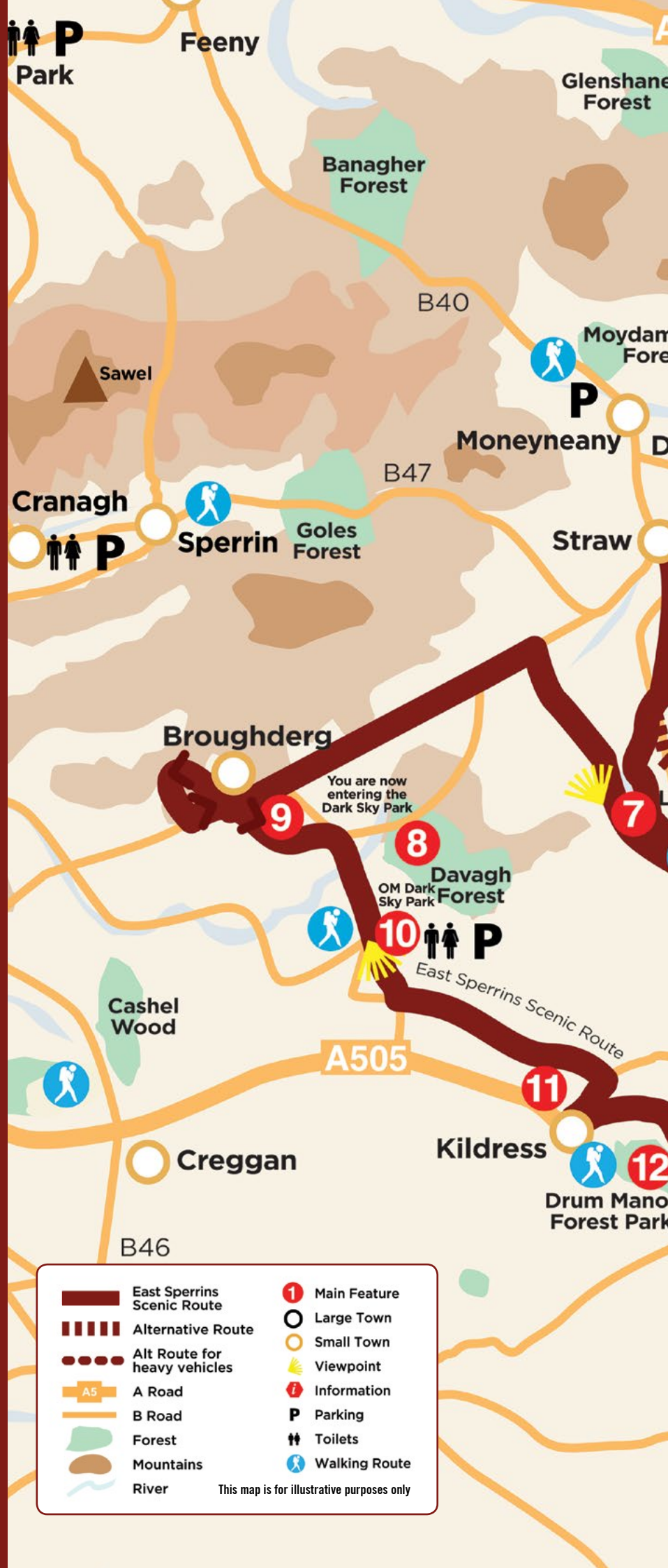


## 6 SLIEVE GALLION

is one of the mountain peaks of the East Sperrins (ascent 528m), offering views of the surrounding area.

## 7 LOUGH FEA

has a 4.15 km circular pathway offering panoramic scenery, making this the ideal place for walkers. Kids play area and picnic facilities are also available.



	East Sperrins Scenic Route		Main Feature
	Alternative Route		Large Town
	Alt Route for heavy vehicles		Small Town
	A Road		Viewpoint
	B Road		Information
	Forest		Parking
	Mountains		Toilets
	River		Walking Route

This map is for illustrative purposes only





**8 OM DARK SKY PARK & OBSERVATORY  
DAVAGH FOREST TRAILS**

Davagh Forest is a picturesque forest boasting 31km of walking, cycling and mountain bike trails. OM Dark Sky Park and Observatory is situated in the forest. Combining the latest technology with bespoke evening audio-visual shows, visitors are able to explore our solar system and stargaze using telescopes to view the night sky without light pollution. Davagh is the only official dark sky park in Northern Ireland. From here you can walk the Solar Walk over to Beaghmore Stone Circles, view our 'Giant' (stargazer) which is over 7m tall or participate in the 'Stars and Stones' Experience.

**9 BROUGHDERG** is a rural area boasting many archaeological treasures indicating 7000 years of human habitation. This is the entrance to the Dark Sky Park. Magnificent views of the Sperrins from this area.



**10 BEAGHMORE STONE CIRCLES**

A large, impressive series of Bronze Age ceremonial stone monuments excavated from the surrounding bog between 1945 and 1949 and in 1965. The Beaghmore Stone Circles feature in the 'Stars and Stones' experience and also in Embrace Tours signature tour.



**11 WELLBROOK BEETLING MILL**

The last working water-powered linen beetling mill in Northern Ireland is a unique experience for all the family. Try some scutching, hackling and weaving and over the thundering cacophony of beetling engines, learn about the importance of the linen industry in 19th-century Ireland.

**12 DRUM MANOR FOREST PARK** is colourful in Spring and Autumn with a shrub, butterfly and Japanese garden, arboretum, ponds, mixed woodlands and way-marked trails. Facilities include a large play area, picnic provision and camping.

**13 KILLYMOON CASTLE** The existing castle was designed by John Nash and built in 1803. During World War 2 the 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment of the 82nd Airborne Division of the US Army were stationed here. The 'Milky Bar Commando' Experience tells the story of Paratrooper 18 year old Tony Vickery. Visit Tommy's Kitchen, the GI exhibition or a tour of the Castle. Prior booking essential.



# South Sperrins



**1 OMAGH** is situated at the place where the Drumragh and Camown rivers meet to form the Strule River. Its strategic location was recognised by the O'Neills who built a castle here and it became a dedicated market town following the Plantation of Ulster in 1610. Despite a major accidental fire in 1742 which destroyed most of its buildings, it developed to become the County Town of Tyrone in 1768, taking over from Dungannon. This led to it becoming a major centre for the local administration of justice with a fine courthouse and associated gaol.

**2 GLENPARK ESTATE & OPEN FARM**  
The site of the former Ulster History Park now offers guest accommodation, a caravan park and campsite, a licensed restaurant and bar, children's soft play, a farm shop, access to the beautiful grounds, an open farm with rare breed animals and is also a venue for weddings and events.

**3 GORTIN GLEN FOREST PARK**  
This family-centred forest park offers a range of outdoor recreation facilities including 6 way marked walking trails suiting all abilities, 13km of red & blue grade mountain bike trails, 8km of horse trail, a destination play park and café.



**4 GORTIN LAKES**  
Located 3.5km south of Gortin village, these two kettle hole lakes were formed when large blocks of ice were left behind by the retreating glacier as it scraped along the Owenkillew Valley in the last Ice Age. Visitors who walk around the lakes will be rewarded with spectacular views of the high Sperrins.

**5 GORTIN VILLAGE**  
Gortin is a small picturesque village nestling in the Owenkillew river valley. The village is an ideal starting point for exploring the surrounding hills and glens by bike or on foot, as well as offering welcoming hostleries to unwind after a day's exercise.

**6 HARRY AVERY O'NEILL CASTLE**  
The hills above Newtownstewart provide the setting for the majestic ruins of one of the Gaelic strongholds of the O'Neills. Although traditionally associated with Henry Aibreidh O'Neill, who died in 1392, it is not certain whether this fortification dates from the 14th or 15th century. It is an unusual structure, especially important in relation to the study of native Irish Medieval life. A visit to the nearby ruins of the Stewart Castle in Newtownstewart is also recommended.







**7 ULSTER AMERICAN FOLK PARK & MELLON FUN FARM**

The Ulster American Folk Park tells the story of emigration from Ulster to America in the 18th, 19th and early 20th centuries and provides visitors with a 'living history' experience on its outdoor site. Traditional thatched buildings, American log houses, and a full-scale replica emigrant ship help to bring a bygone era back to life. The Mellon Centre for Migration Studies is also on site.

**8 THE ABINGDON COLLECTION** represents over 55 years of passionate collecting and provides an opportunity for visitors to take a 'walk in the past'. If you lived through the 50's, 60's and 70's, or just like big boy toys, then there is definitely something for you. The collection is open by appointment only. The collection is free of charge, but contributions are gratefully accepted in aid of Cancer Research UK.

**9 BARONSCOURT ESTATE** the home of the Duke of Abercorn's family since the early 1600's, is among a handful of remaining old family estates which combine great historical and architectural interest with a landscape of outstanding natural beauty. Restricted access.



**10 DAVIES BAWN & PARK AMENITY AREA**  
Built on a site occupied at one time by an O'Neill tower house, this defended stone house commands an area of once strategic importance on the River Derg. The bawn was a refuge for planter families and was eventually rendered unfit for occupation after an attack by the O'Neills. Today's ruins consist of a rectangular bawn and the remains of 3 square flankers.

**11 THE DERG VALLEY - ST. PATRICK**  
According to tradition St. Patrick travelled through the Derg Valley on returning from a period of Lenten Penitential Service at Lough Derg - one of Ireland's most prominent ecclesiastical centres. While in the area check out St. Patrick's Well - the water from which is said to cure toothache; or walk the International Appalachian Trail and discover our geological connections with North America, Europe & Africa.

**12 BOLAGHT MOUNTAIN** provides an excellent viewpoint to survey the rich diversity of the Derg Valley, the Sperrins' uplands and the hills of Donegal.

**13 SLOUGHAN GLEN**  
This pleasant woodland walk along the Blackwater River takes the visitor steadily upwards to be greeted by the roar of its waterfall thundering over a rocky edge.

**14 PIGEON TOP PICNIC SITE**  
This site overlooking Omagh, offers spectacular panoramic views of the region. Close by in the townland of Cavanacaw a seam of gold is being mined.



# Seek Out Inspiring Sunsets & Star Filled Skies

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To avoid disappointment, it is recommended that visitors check itineraries in advance of travelling.

This information is available upon request in a number of formats:

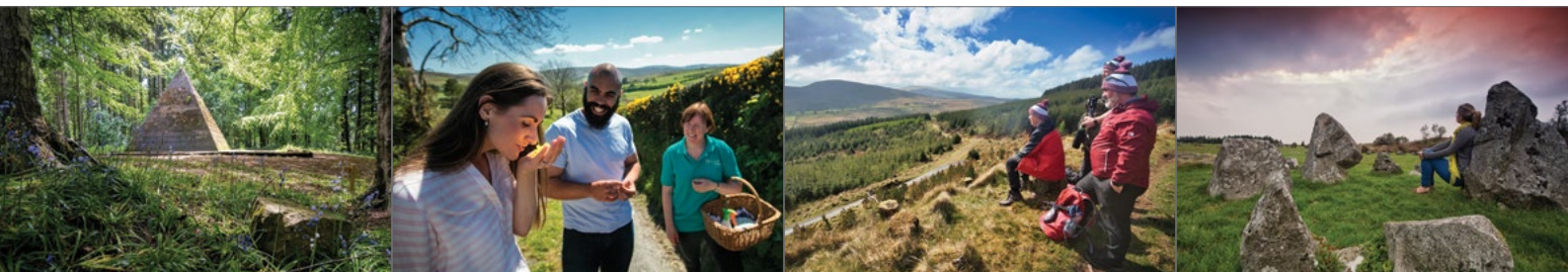
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Email: **equality@derrystrabane.com**

## See You Soon!

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