

WALK DATA

Description: The Cliff Walk is a linear walk between Bray and Greystones. Following the train line along the cliffs of Bray Head, this well maintained walk offers stunning and dramatic views along steep cliffs into the Irish Sea. More information at www.thecliffwalk.ie

Distance: 7km – 4.5m
Estimated Time: 2 ½ hours
Total Gain: 117m – 384ft
Highest Point: 127m – 417ft
Terrain: Average
Contour: Hilly
Good for: Families

Public Transport:

Regular DART train from Dublin City centre to Bray and Greystones. 145 Bus Service at 10 minute intervals to Bray from Dublin City Centre. Finnegans Bus Service to Bray from Sandyford LUAS Station

Warnings & Recommendations:

Dangerous Cliffs. Stay on the trail

Starting and Finishing:

- Bray Band Stand on Seafront
Lat: 53.20199 Long: -6.09726
- Greystones Harbour
Lat: 53.14978 Long: -6.06515

Online map at:

- <http://goo.gl/txq1o>
- Scan QR code:



TOURISM INFORMATION

Bray Tourist Office:

Bray Civic Centre
Main Street Bray
Web: www.bray.ie



County Wicklow Tourism:

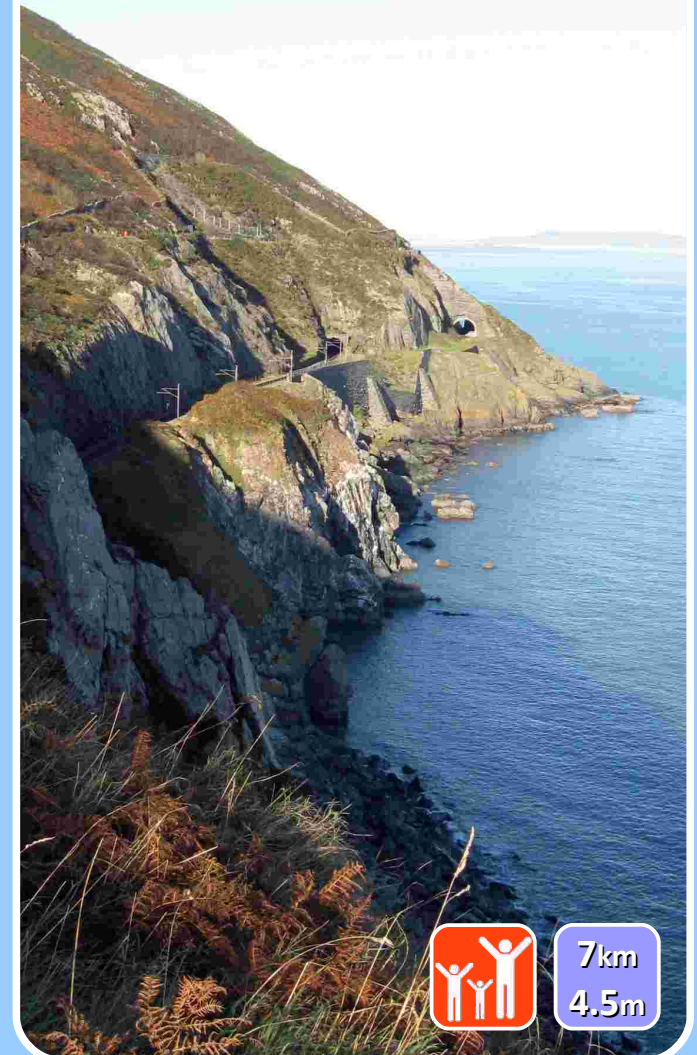
Web: www.visitwicklow.ie

MAP



Wicklow WALKS

Bray Head Cliff Walk



MAIN POINTS OF INTEREST

Raheen na gClig Church



The view from Bray Head shows Raheen na gClig church, otherwise known as “the little Church of the Bell” or “little Fort of the Stones.” The remains of the Church stand in the middle of Raheen Park. The church dates from medieval times, possibly 12th or 13th century. Adjacent to the church is St. Patricks Well, which was a site of pilgrimage in early Christian times and supposedly blessed by the saint at one time. The church is similar to another, known as St. Crispin’s Cell which is located just off the cliff walk at the Grove, about 5km away to the South.

The Toll Gate at Lord Meath’s Lodge



The railway company owned the walkway up to Lord Meath’s Lodge. They kept the gate closed and charged a penny for entry each day except Friday. The estate house was Killruddery House, which is now open to the public. A dirt road was also constructed around the top of Bray Head for guests, and this was also open to the public. The cliff walk was closed each Friday when it was reserved for Lord Meath’s own use. The steps above the toll house led to the estate and the stones for the cottage and the toll gate were collected from the immediate area with the exception of granite and red brick which were brought to the site.

Smugglers!



Just beyond Lord Meath’s lodge is an area called the Brandy Hole. The cave was immense with its entrance at sea level, and it is believed, a connecting tunnel to the exiting path. Brandy, tea, gin, silks and wine were smuggled in from France. The plan, under cover of darkness or misty weather, was to land their smuggled goods, and then to sail openly with their legitimate cargo to Dublin and other ports, deceiving the Revenue authorities. As corruption was common in the Revenue and Custom services at that time, the officers, when necessary, could look in the wrong place. The cave was destroyed when the railway was built.

The 1867 Train Crash



The building of the railway along the cliff walk had to overcome significant geological challenges. Because of constant erosion, it had long been felt that stretches of the railway line on the cliff walk were dangerous. On August 9th 1867, the train from Enniscorthy to Dublin derailed due to a faulty joint between two rails on the bridge spanning Ram Scalp. Two passengers were killed but twenty three, including the driver and fireman were injured. It proved very difficult to access the crash site to remove people from the area. Following the crash, a new tunnel was built further into the cliff face. The old tunnel entrance can still be seen today.

FLORA & FAUNA



The spectacular cliffs of Bray Head are home to extraordinary birdlife, among them seabirds such as Gannet, Kittiwake the enormous predatory Great Black-Backed Gull, and the Fulmar, a species of petrel. On the lower rocks Guillemots, Black Guillemots, Razorbills, Shags and Cormorants can be seen drying their wings. To the south, before Greystones, the rock cliffs give way to sandy cliffs and banks, an ideal nesting habitat for Sand Martins in the summer. Peregrine falcons hunt along the cliff path, diving for their prey, while Kestrels nest high up on Bray Head where they can be recognised by their distinctive hovering.



Bray Head is an excellent location for **dolphin and whale watching**. Train passengers frequently see large **Bottlenose Dolphins** and small **black Harbour Porpoises** as they leap from the sea at the bottom of the cliffs. Gigantic toothless, filter-feeding **Basking Sharks** are also a strong viewing possibility, as they are very common close to the Wicklow shores in summer.

Along the Cliff Walk there are many plants and some very colourful wild flowers such as the widespread **Red Valerian**. On the poorer, acidic soils, **heather, bracken, and gorse** dominate. Salt loving species such as **sea pink, sea campion, samphire** and **sea mallow** thrive on the nutrient rich glacial deposits, while species such as **Honeysuckle** and **Dog Rose**, commonly associated with hedgerows and woodlands also grow in abundance. The **roses** here provide vital support for the **Leaf-cutter Bee**, a species that nests in holes in walls and fences all along the Cliff Walk. These bees cut circular pieces out of the leaves and can be seen rolling these pieces up into carpets and carrying them back to their nests.

The Cliffs are also home to **Common Lizards**, the only species of reptile naturally found in Ireland. They can be seen basking on the broad walls on sunny days, but they are so perfectly camouflaged as to be easily overlooked by most people walking the path.