

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 offer stunning and dramatic views along steep cliffs into the Irish Sea. Use one of the many train back to your starting point . More info 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 commuters train (DART) from Dublin City center into either Bray or Greystones. 45A bus from Dun Laoghaire. Finnegan's Bus from Sandyford LUAS Station

Recommendations & Warnings:

Dangerous Cliffs. Stay on the trail

Starting and/or Finish:

- 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
Phone: 01 286 7128
Web: www.braytourism.ie

County Wicklow Tourism:

Web: www.visitwicklow.ie

MAP



Wicklow WALKS

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Bray Head Cliff Walk



www.visitwicklow.ie

MAIN POINTS OF INTEREST

Raheennadlig Church



The view from Bray Head shows Raheen na gClig church, “the little Church of the Bell” or “Little Fort of the Stones” in the foreground and Bray town as it was in its early days of development. 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. Patrick's well, supposedly blessed by St Patrick himself, and was a site of pilgrimage in early Christian times. This church is similar to another church, known as St. Crispin's Cell which is located just off the cliff walk at the Grove, about 5kms south of here.

Lord Meath's Lodge – Toll Gate



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

Smugglers and the Brandy Hole



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 existing path. Brandy, tea, gin, silks and wine were smuggled in from France. The usual plan was, under cover of night or misty weather, to land their smuggled goods and then to sail openly with their legitimate cargo to Dublin or other ports, and thus hoodwink the Revenue authorities. There can be little doubt, however, that corruption was rife among the Revenue and Customs officers at that period, and that they could, when necessary, look in the wrong direction. This point was out of sight of the coastguards in Bray and Greystones. The cave was destroyed when the railway was built.

Train Crash 1867



The building of the railway along the cliffwalk had to overcome huge 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 with the driver and fireman were injured. It was extremely difficult to get access to the crash site to get people out of the area. Following the crash, a new tunnel was built further into the cliff face, as can be seen in the photographs. The old tunnel entrance can still be seen today.

For more info go to:
www.visitwicklow.ie/cliffwalk

FLORA & FLORA



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 nest holes.

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.