



Fastnet Trails

Kilcoe - Ballydehob - 6km Linear

Map of the Kilcoe - Ballydehob Walk



This walk is mostly along quiet country roads with a short section along the side of the N71 near Ballydehob. It is highly recommended that you wear a hi-viz vest for safety reasons and good footwear for comfort reasons.

Distances and approx walk times:

6.2km - one way direct (~1.5hrs)

11.3km - one way with all detours (~3hrs)

17.5km - Kilcoe to B'dehob return with detours once only. (~4.5hrs)



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Walk Guide

From Kilcoe to Ballydehob

Read this Walk Guide in conjunction with the map above for best results. The route is marked with blue arrows which you need to look out for.



This walk is the first leg of the Fastnet Trail heading west and is usually walked in one direction but it is of course easy enough to retrace one's steps and return to Kilcoe on foot. There are three detours which each lead down to an interesting feature and viewpoint and these are well worthwhile.

Starting at the trailhead in Kilcoe (1) follow the side-road south past the front of the church and the school. Level at first the road soon descends alongside a gurgling stream and past a boat yard. Soon you reach a road junction (2) with a large house to your right and a bridge ahead.

Here you turn sharp **RIGHT** and head uphill round the back of the house. The road soon levels off a bit then bears right and climbs again past a few ruins to reach an old burial ground which is well worth exploring for a few minutes.

Just past the old church there is a cross roads (3). The main route is straight on but to the left is the first optional detour of about 4km there and back. At the end is an old burial ground (3b) and church ruin with fabulous views out over Roaringwater Bay and the restored Kilcoe Castle.

From the cross roads at (3) continue west steadily downhill until you reach the picturesque Bealaclare Bridge where you might see kingfishers if you are quiet and patient. Just after the bridge is a road junction (4), a good road to the right and a grassy track to the left. The grassy track is the second detour, a short one this time (500m return), down to a very quiet small pier where the Leamawaddra river enters the bay.

From the cross roads continue up the hill between houses, one of which was recently re-thatched. The road rises and falls gently for about one kilometre, passing various entrances to houses and farms which you can ignore until you reach a cross roads (5) by a small forestry plantation. To the left is the final detour option (about 2km there and back) which brings you down past Skeaghanore Duck Farm to the peaceful Skeaghanore Pier (5b) where you can easily observe a wide range of waders on the shore.

From the cross roads continue **STRAIGHT ON** in a NW direction and after a short rise the road levels and descends slowly until it reaches a junction (6) with the N71.

Follow the N71 west for less than a kilometre, taking care as it's a busy road. After you pass the 50kph speed sign you will see a major junction ahead. The N71 goes right to Bantry and you should go **LEFT** into a small road leading into a car park. At the far end there is a small path alongside the water which winds its way under the famous "twelve arched bridge". You can follow the path on an elevated section over the water to the road on the far side where you turn **RIGHT** towards the village, again passing under the old tramway bridge. As you approach the Community Centre you will see the Trailhead on your left.

It's up to you where you go from here!



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From Ballydehob to Kilcoe

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Starting from the Trailhead (8) you should walk down beside the water and under the 12 Arch Bridge until you come to a raised pathway which crosses the water to the LEFT. Following this path brings you back under the old tramway bridge on the far side and into a car park through which you can reach the N71 main road. (7).

Turn RIGHT now towards Skibbereen/Cork and taking due care follow the main road for about $\frac{3}{4}$ kilometre until you see a side road branch off to the RIGHT (6).

Following the side road, after about half a kilometre you come to a side road on the left which you ignore and almost immediately, the road ahead splits at a fork in the road. Be sure to continue STRAIGHT ON ignoring the right branch. The road soon levels out now and starts to descend gently to reach a cross roads with a small forestry plantation. Here you have the option to make a worthwhile detour down to Skeaghanore Pier. (about 2km, there and back).

From the cross roads (5) continue South East and the road gently falls and rises for about one kilometre until you pass a thatched house on your left and then a small cross roads (4) just before the delightful Beaclare Bridge. If you take the grassy track to the right between the house and the Leamawaddra river this short optional diversion brings you down to a very quiet little pier where the river enters the sea.

From Beaclare Bridge, the route is east again, gently climbing to reach another cross roads after

less than a kilometre. Here you have the option to make a long detour (4km there and back) down to an old Church and burial ground with splendid views over Roaringwater Bay and Kilcoe Castle.

From the cross roads (3) continue east for a short distance and as the road starts to descend, you will see the remains of pre-famine church and a well restored burial ground. This is well worth a five minute stop to explore.

Continuing down the hill past the remains of the boys' school the road sweeps left and then drops sharp right down to a junction (2) just before a bridge. If you have time it's worth crossing the bridge and taking a short walk down to Roaringwater Pier which is very photogenic!

From the bridge the route is up the road along the left bank of the stream and soon you pass a boat yard on your left. Before long you will see the scholl and church ahead and you have reached your destination.

