



Fastnet Trails

Toormore Loop

Route - Toormore Loop

Trailhead – Toormore (Altar Church)

Distance – about 3km. Map – see end.

A short but very pleasant walk ideal for children. Park outside the church taking care not to block any entrance.

Starting by the Trailhead Map you should follow the orange arrows with Toormore loop written around the outside.



The first leg of the walk goes up beside the church, with the stream on your left, and soon you reach a gentle uphill section with bends. Look out for a small gate on the left before you reach the farmhouse up ahead. Is there an orange arrow on the post?



Now, go through the gate, closing it behind you, and descend a gravel/grass path and follow it across the field between two wire fences. Take care because this is an electric fence and it might be turned on! It won't kill you if you touch it but it might give you a nasty fright.



Follow the path up the valley and don't forget to look around you as you go along. There's catkins, wild garlic and even bluebells here in the spring. Watch out for two unusual boulders on the left side of the path. Can you guess what kind of stone they are and how they got there? Are they the different types of stone – look carefully.



Continue on up the valley and look out for the big gate up ahead which gives access to the road. Before you go up the final slope look over to the left ahead of you and you'll see a very unusual bridge over the stream tucked behind a big tree. Archaeologists have commented that the construction is like that of a clapper bridge with stone slabs at the top but the tapering sides make it quite unique. Do NOT go under the bridge as it may be unsafe.





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Now, emerge through the big gate and closing it behind you turn left along this quiet road which soon starts to rise up ahead of you. Before you reach the top look out for a small passing place on the right where you might see what looks like white gravel on the ground.



Look closely and see if you can find any big pieces. Are they shells? Could this be a place where sea birds come to break open their dinner?

Continue over the brow of the hill enjoying the views across the wild countryside to the right. Can you see Knockaphuca in the distance ahead of you? Descending the hill look out for some old stone walls which are covered in mosses and ferns – they were well built and are now quite old.



After quite a short distance you'll reach a cross roads with some farm buildings ahead. Look for the orange arrow and turn left here and head out towards the main road. Sometimes you'll see boats stored here to keep them safe from the storms in winter time.

When you reach the main road take care as traffic can forget about walkers sometimes. Looking ahead you might see a small cottage hiding amongst the bushes. This was a fisherman's cottage and is actually on an island although it's only cut off at high tide twice a day and now makes a fine holiday cottage.



You can probably see the church by now but as you go back to the trailhead look across at the estuary and see if you can see some waders and gulls. You should see Curlew, Oystercatchers, Redshanks, Heron and many types of gull depending on the state of the tide and time of year.



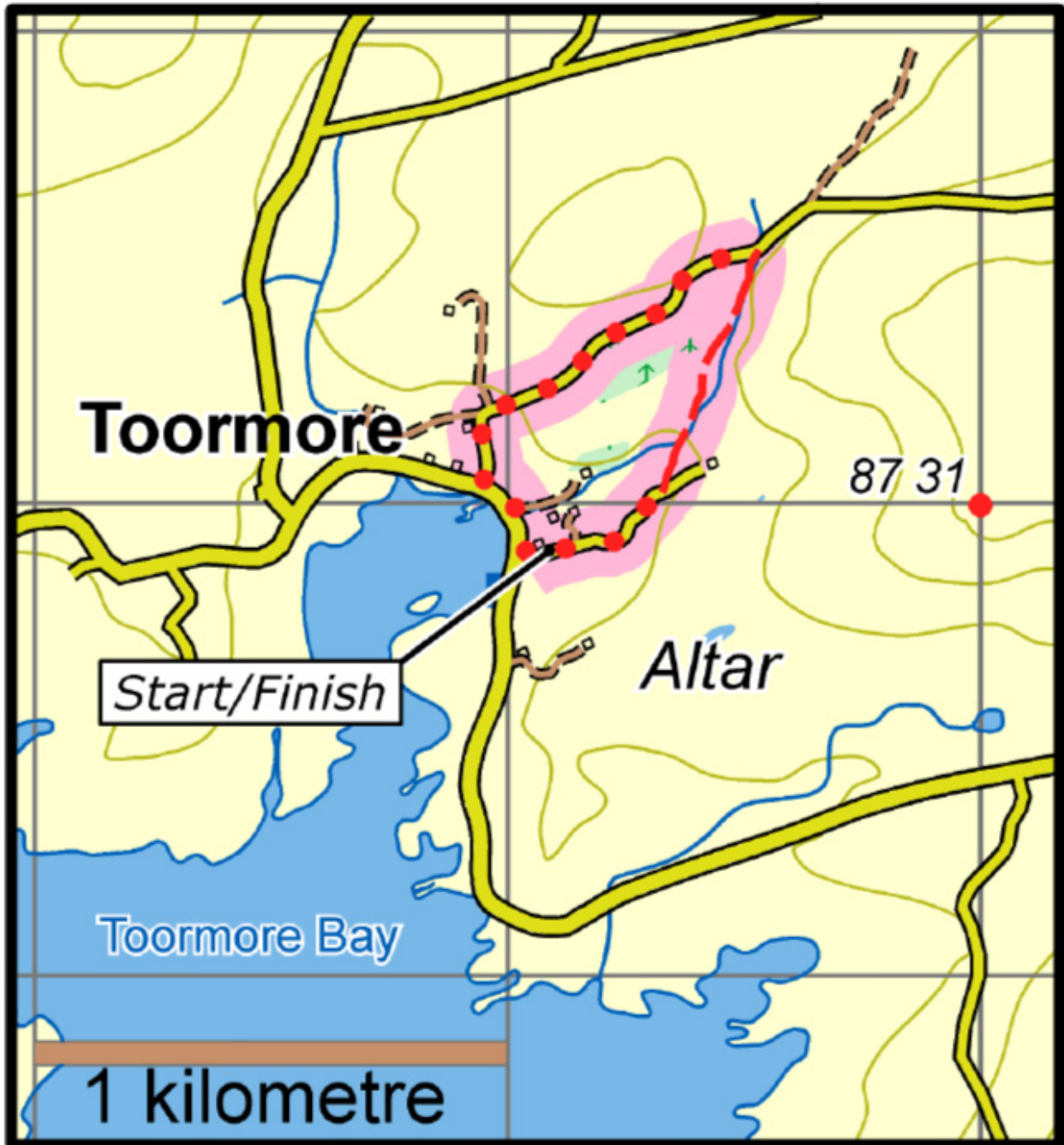
Before you catch the bus or jump into your car take five minutes to wander around the church yard and inspect some of the old gravestones which mark the final resting place of many local characters who no doubt rest in peace in this wonderful location by the sea.



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