

CLINTS OF DROMORE - INBYE WALK

- Circular moorland walk**
- 2.5km/1 ½ miles**
- Allow 1 hour**
- Hard surface track and paths, boardwalk and rough grass paths. Steps.**
- Moderate**
- Stout shoes recommended.**

PARKING is available at the Cairnsmore of Fleet National Nature Reserve visitor centre, run by Scottish Natural Heritage. From Gatehouse, take the B796 signposted to Cairnsmore of Fleet Nature Reserve and follow the signs to the reserve.

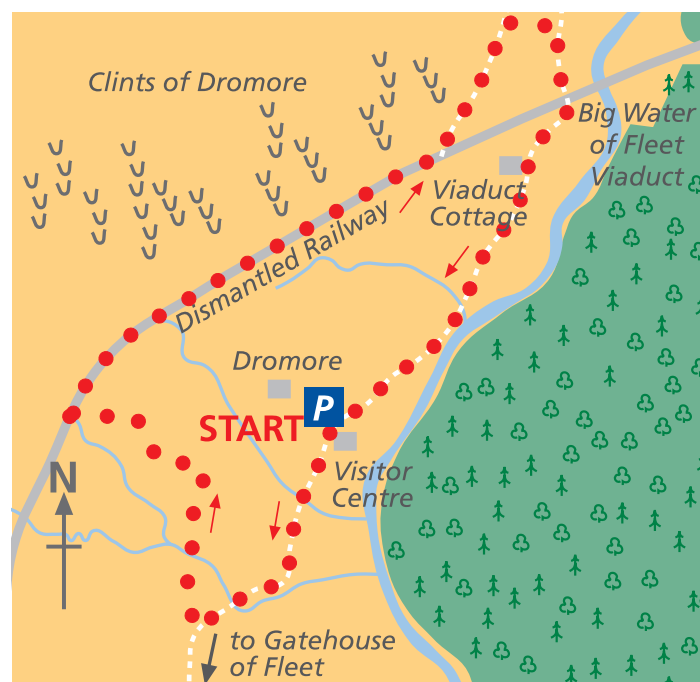
START From the car park, walk past the visitor centre then follow the waymarkers back to the start.

The path initially passes 'inbye' land, those fields closest to the farm buildings, used to bring sheep in from the hills for lambing or shearing. Follow the track and enjoy fine views down the valley. The rounded hillocks on the valley floor are known as drumlins and were formed from debris dumped by glaciers during the last ice age. On leaving the track continue over boardwalk, crossing boggy grassland. In amongst the rushes here you may see the insect eating plant, sundew which is specially adapted to the wet conditions.

Throughout your walk you can hardly fail to notice the Clints of Dromore, a spectacular, rugged, granite outcrop, surrounded by moorland. Moorland birds such as meadow pipits and wheatears seek cover in the blaeberry, cotton grass and heather covering the moor, while peregrines and merlins hunt overhead. The moor is carefully managed through the grazing of sheep and swiping or burning away of old heather. This produces a variety of heights and ages of heather to provide the best conditions for breeding black and red grouse.

Your route back takes in some of the former railway track. Part of the Castle Douglas to Portpatrick line, this was completed in 1862 then dismantled in 1965. Nowadays it is used by walkers and cyclists, here to enjoy the wonderful scenery. In spring and summer it is lined with wildflowers and parties of long-tailed tits flit from tree to tree in winter. The impressive viaduct over the Water of Fleet, once used to bring game shooting parties into the area, is no longer in use.

The path returns to the car park alongside the Big Water of Fleet, where dippers and dragonflies can be spotted. Back at the car park the visitor centre, set in the old byre has a wealth of information about the reserve and details of recent wildlife sightings.



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Leave gates as you find them - Keep dogs under close control at all times - Keep to paths across farmland - Take care on country roads
Use gates and stiles to cross fences, hedges and walls - Respect farm livestock, crops and machinery - Take your litter home with you
Protect wildlife, plants and trees - Guard against risk of fire - Make no unnecessary noise.