



Hillwalk Guides – Hikes in Clare

Ballyvaughan Wood Loop (*Info Booklet*)

Dear fellow hiker!

We trust that you are looking forward to a wonderful walk in the Burren, exploring the valley behind the seaside village of Ballyvaughan with splendid views of the surrounding Burren's folded limestone layers.

In this document, we have put together some information that will help you to maximise the enjoyment of your walk. Please consider the environment when printing this booklet, route notes and map (supplied separately).

- Important Information for your walk
- What to Wear & What to Bring
- The Burren
- The Burren Way
- Local Attractions
- Where to Eat
- Safety Information
- Emergency Procedure
- Leave No Trace & Countryside Code
- More from Hillwalk Tours

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR YOUR WALK

PARKING: Your walk begins from the car park at the quay in Ballyvaughan(GPS: 53.1177, -9.1525), on the R477 coast road between Ballyvaughan and Fanore. We advise that you do not leave anything of value in your car.

WEATHER: This walk stays off the hills and in the safety of the woodlands and forests along the river. Nevertheless, you may wish to check the weather forecast before setting out and we recommend you do not walk during any known weather event. Conditions locally can vary, even in the absence of weather warnings, so always consider your own stamina, confidence and comfort level when deciding if you will go ahead with any walk. See what to wear, what to bring and safety information sections for more details.

BRINGING YOUR DOG: This hike crosses land that is sometimes used for cattle and sheep grazing. For this reason we recommend that you do not bring your dog on this hike.

COMMENTS, SUGGESTIONS & FEEDBACK: Hillwalk Tours take great care in the preparation of all our material. However, we rely on comments and suggestions from walkers to continue to provide the best experience possible. We consider all feedback, make improvements where possible and reply individually to every walker. Send your thoughts to feedback@hillwalktours.com – thanks!

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What to Wear

BASE LAYER - This is what you wear against your skin and the best options are breathable and wicking fabrics instead of cotton t-shirts. They will move moisture away from the skin so that you feel more comfortable when you are walking.

FLEECE – Will keep you warm in the cooler months, and it will allow you to shed layers when you are working hard in the summer.

LIGHT AND COMFORTABLE TROUSERS - Make sure you choose trousers that are stretchy or allow enough space to move your legs freely. Jeans / Denims are not suitable for hill walking.

WATERPROOF JACKET AND OVER-TROUSERS - You never know when you will need protection from wind and rain so make sure you pack a breathable, waterproof jacket and over-trousers.

WICKING SOCKS - Choose non-cotton socks that fit well and will move moisture away from your feet to stop them feeling sweaty. This will help to reduce the likelihood of blisters.

FOOTWEAR – We recommend you bring comfortable, waterproof, lightweight shoes or boots. Remember that some trails can become quite wet and muddy, after periods of rain.

WARM HAT & GLOVES – Depending on the season and the weather you may want to bring these.

CHANGE OF CLOTHES: We advise bringing a change of clothes (which can be left in your car, if preferred) in case you get wet during your hike, ensuring a more comfortable journey home.

What to Bring

MOBILE PHONE – Fully charged it will allow you to call for help in an emergency. If you are planning on using our GPS tracks as a navigational aid or referring to this booklet on your phone during your hike you may need to pack a power-bank to supplement your phone battery.

BACKPACK / RUCKSACK (*with Waterproof Cover or Liner*) - To store all your essentials including extra layers of clothing, your waterproofs, camera and your lunch, snacks and drink

WATER - Don't forget how important it is to stay hydrated and bring at least 1 - 2 litres of water per person, and more depending on the weather!

PICNIC LUNCH: Even on shorter walks it is essential to bring some food with you. Traveling to the start point, weather/trail conditions on the day as well as wanting to capture that perfect photo can all add time to your walk and make breakfast seem like a distant memory!

Additional Suggestions

SUN CREAM, SUNGLASSES AND SUNHAT – Let's hope you'll need those ☺

MIDGE/INSECT REPELLENT – A good idea in the summer, especially if you are prone to get bitten

CAMERA – Vital for capturing photos of the stunning scenery

WALKING POLES – Assist forward movement and balance, reduce impact on your knees, and help with balance in difficult terrain. A pair is best, but many hikers also just use one.

SIT MAT – A small, foldable mat that provides comfort when sitting on the ground during breaks.

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The Burren

“A country where there is not water enough to drown a man, wood enough to hang one, nor earth enough to bury them.” Edmund Ludlow, Member of British Parliament, 1651-52.

The Burren forms the northern part of County Clare, overlooking Galway Bay and the Atlantic Ocean. The word “Burren” comes from an Irish word “Boíreann” meaning a rocky place. This is an appropriate name when you consider the lack of soil cover and the 130 square kilometres of spectacular terraced carboniferous limestone hills and valleys that characterise the area.

Human civilisation came to the Burren shortly after the end of the Ice Age, 10,000 years ago. Stories of the ancient peoples are still passed on by word of mouth, through imaginative tales that take the form of the folklore for which Ireland is famous as well as through serious scholarship.

There is evidence of past cultures and learning everywhere in the Burren. Indeed, in addition to its unique geological attributes, the Burren is also renowned for its collection of archaeological sites and artefacts – a collection which led famous cartographer Tim Robinson to describe the region as one ‘*vast memorial to bygone cultures*’.

The magnificent portal tomb at Poulnabrone in the rocky heart of the Burren is one of the most easily recognised monuments in Ireland but is only one very small piece of an extraordinary wealth of heritage to be found in the Burren.

However, this one monument alone reveals much about the people who live here. Dating back around 5,800 years, studies have shown that this tomb contained the remains of up to 22 people, interred over six centuries. Evidence recovered from this site indicated that these people were farmers of cattle, sheep and goat, and that cereal was also grown.

Farming has been important to the area for over 6,000 years and it is hard to believe today that the apparently barren Burren could once have supported a large, thriving and settled farming community. But when the first farmers arrived in the Burren the landscape was covered with a shallow but fertile soil which supported extensive woodlands of hazel and pine.

This woodland was much easier to clear than the dense, deep-rooted elm and oak forests of the lowland regions. Year-round natural fertilising with manure further improved the existing soil and even today there are still places in the Burren with deep, fertile soil that are known as *gáirdíni* (*little gardens*).

That said, in the years leading up to the Great Irish Famine (1845-52), far too much pressure was being put on the land (up to 400 people living off one square mile of land) with the result that it had the appearance of a barren, desolate wasteland. Following the famine, the pressure on this environment diminished notably through an enlargement in farm holdings, a decline in sheep numbers and a reduction in population.

As well as farming, the Burren (and neighbouring Aran Islands) was home to some of the earliest places of education in Europe. Missionaries from far and wide would come to train at the monastic school at Kilmacduagh during the 7th century while the law school at Cahermacnaughten and the bardic (poets, artists, etc.) school at Finavarra thrived between the 6th and 16th centuries.

In addition, the Burren has a long history of traditional Irish music. It is particularly known for the “West Clare Style” of concertina playing and the music festival in Doolin and the region is home to countless artists and writers who are part of a continuing revival of the west of Ireland.

The Burren Way

One of the best ways to experience the Burren is by walking the Burren Way. This 123km long trail starts at Lahinch, follows the coast along the Cliffs of Moher past Doolin and on to Fanore before turning inland and making its way through the heart of the Burren to Corofin.

This walk takes in the best of what the Burren area has to offer. From the coast at Doolin to the remains left by the Neolithic inhabitants of the Burren to the rich heritage of early Christian churches and sites. Terrain consists mainly of quiet tarmac roads, old green roads, ancient cattle droving roads, paths and forestry tracks.

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Local Attractions

Ailwee Cave & Birds of Prey Centre, Ballyvaughan – Deep Underground & High into the Sky

The Burren region is full of thousands of ancient caves but, of these, Ailwee is considerably older than most with calcite samples taken from the cave adjudged to be more than 350,000 years old.

The cave system itself has more than 1km of passages leading into the heart of the mountain above. Once home to a fast-flowing underground river, this flow of water has now largely left the cave leaving behind interesting geological features such as stalactites, stalagmites and a small waterfall.

One other interesting aspect of the caves is the fact that it was once home to a group of brown bears. These animals have been extinct in Ireland since the 10th Century (due to over-hunting) but caves such as Ailwee would be typical of the type of shelter they would have sought out.

The Birds of Prey Centre beside the cave has been educating and entertaining visitors with dynamic flying displays set against the dramatic Burren Landscape since 2008. The mission of the Centre is to aid the conservation of Birds of Prey through visitor awareness and education.

For more details, opening times and prices visit www.aillweecave.ie or call +353 (0)65 7077036

Caherconnell Stone Fort & Poulnabrone Dolmen – The Best of Irish Archaeology & Sheepdog Demonstrations

Caherconnell, near Carran and Ballyvaughan in County Clare, is one of the best-preserved stone forts in the Burren. This impressive structure, which measures 45 metres in diameter and is protected by a 3-metre-high wall, was built 1500 years ago. The visitor centre provides an informative 20-minute audio-visual presentation on the fort, its inhabitants, its rich history and archaeology.

Learn about the lives the former inhabitants led and the stories they told in the shadow of the great stone fort. Ongoing excavations by the archaeology field school during the months of June, July, and August each year have yielded fascinating results, enhancing Caherconnell's reputation as a prominent archaeological site.

A visit to Caherconnell Stone Fort from May to September may also coincide with enthralling sheep dog demonstrations.

As well as giving you a chance to get more acquainted with the history of the area, the Mountain Haven Café provides a welcome respite from the walking and is a great place to savour delicious farm fresh food, home baking and freshly ground coffee.

For more details, opening times and prices visit www.burrenforts.ie or call +353 (0)65 7089999

Burren Perfumery, Carran – Something Smells Good!

A family run business deep in the heart of the Burren, the Perfumery produces a range of soaps, balms, creams and perfumes using only natural and organic ingredients. Ingredients are sourced worldwide but local flora is also used and some of them, such as meadowsweet and marjoram, are harvested from the surrounding area each summer.

One of the main attractions of the centre is the possibility to mingle with the staff and learn about and witness the manufacturing process from start to finish. Visit the *Soap Room* to find out why it takes six weeks to handcraft one 100g bar of soap or drop into the *Blending Room* to learn how to make the perfect hand cream or body lotion.

The on-site tea rooms also come highly recommended and are a beautiful spot in which to relax and enjoy the freshly baked breads, cakes and scones, the locally produced cheeses and herbal teas from the on-site garden.

Opening hours at the Burren Perfumery are from 10am to 5pm year-round, with longer opening hours in the summer. See website for more details. All products are for sale, make wonderful gifts and can be shipped worldwide directly from the Perfumery.

For more details, opening times and prices visit www.burrenperfumery.com or call +353 (0)65 7089102

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Cliffs of Moher, near Doolin – “The Eighth Wonder of the World”

Standing a stomach churning 214m above the Atlantic Ocean at their highest point, it is no wonder that the famous Cliffs of Moher are consistently ranked as one of Ireland’s premier tourist destinations and were put forward as Ireland’s finalist in the global campaign to nominate an 8th Wonder of the World.

In addition to the compelling views, the Cliffs are home to one of the major colonies of seabirds in Ireland with 40,000 breeding pairs making their homes there. Puffins, Guillemots, Razorbills and Kittiwakes are just some of the birds to look out for. Although, to be honest, you will probably hear their raucous calls before you see them!

To learn more about the Cliffs, we recommend that you make time to explore the Cliffs of Moher Information Centre, which you will pass on your walk (see route notes). The centre is open throughout the year from 9am until the early evening (at least 6pm) and has a wide range of facilities (ATM, gift shop, café, public toilets, first aid, etc.) as well as an interesting exhibition area.

For more details, opening times and prices visit www.cliffsofmoher.ie or call + 353 (0)65 7086141

The Doolin Cave & Visitor Centre – Home to the longest free-hanging stalactite in Europe

This limestone cave hosts the truly impressive Poll an Eidhneáin, the Great Stalactite. The stalactite is said to weigh over 10 tonnes and is reported to be 7.3m in length, hanging freely from the ceiling of the cave. This makes it the longest known free-hanging stalactite in Europe! Usually stalactites grow at roughly 10cm per 1,000 years - so the Great Stalactite likely took over 70,000 years to form.

Opened in 2010, the development of the cave as a visitor attraction was subject to criticism by environmentalists for years. In order to create a facility that is accessible to visitors, blasting was not allowed as it was feared that this would cause damage to the Great Stalactite. The development of the cave as a tourist attraction was only granted under the condition that a visitor centre was also built, which would monitor and control visitor numbers to the cave, in an effort to protect it.

Apart from the Great Stalactite, the Doolin Cave & Visitor Centre also features a self-guided outdoor nature trail, a pottery shop and a café that serves soups, tasty sandwiches and home-baked cakes. The perfect place for a coffee break for hungry walkers! The outdoor nature trail is free to all cave visitors and you can also enjoy the delightful fairy village during your visit.

The Doolin Cave & Visitor Centre is generally open between 10am and 6pm. Tours are approximately 45 minutes in length and the last tour leaves at 5pm. You will be happy to hear that they also offer a 20% discount to walkers, or if you pre-book your ticket online!

For more details, opening times and prices visit www.doolincave.ie or call +353 (0)65 7075761

Where to Eat

Below is a selection of evening meal suggestions near your walk, put together based on the recommendations of previous walkers and on the advice of members of the local community. For lighter bites, there are also a selection of lovely cafes in Ballyvaughan, in particular during the summer.

L'Arco Italian Restaurant, Main Street, Ballyvaughan: Chefs Matteo and Gianmaria Gala prepare the most delicious authentic Italian dishes with locally sourced ingredients. You know you can't go wrong if the locals drive for miles to eat here. Tel. +353 (0)65 7083900

Monks Seafood Restaurant and Pub, Coast Road, Ballyvaughan: Situated on the coast road by the old pier in Ballyvaughan, this bar and restaurant is renowned for its tasty seafood chowder. A lovely place for an 'al fresco' dinner by the sea on a warm summer evening. Tel. +353 (0)65 7077059

The Wildflower Restaurant, The Wild Atlantic Lodge, Main Street, Ballyvaughan: The chefs at the Wildflower Restaurant believe that food should be sophisticated yet uncomplicated. They are committed to offering you the finest and freshest Irish produce in an elegant atmosphere, with high quality service. Tel. +353 (0)65 7077003

Other popular 'eateries' along the N67 between Ballyvaughan and Galway City are **Linnane's Lobster Bar**, in New Quay, and the **cafes, pubs and restaurants in Kinvarra**

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Safety Information

Even on the best of days there is the possibility that something can go wrong. All it takes is an accidental slip and a badly sprained ankle. In order to know what to do in those circumstances and how to prevent them, if possible, we have provided the following information.

General Advice

- We recommend that, if possible, you **stay on the trail** during your hike.
- Take particular **care on the descent** and/or when you are tired, as this is when most accidents occur.
- Remember, the general rule for **walking on roads** in Ireland is to walk on the right-hand side (facing oncoming traffic). However, if the road is turning to the right, cross over to the left-hand side for better visibility of oncoming traffic.
- Note that the provided walking times do *not* account for breaks taken for lunch/rest/photos/etc. Always ensure that you still have plenty of time to reach the end of your hike before darkness falls.

Encountering Animals

DOGS may occasionally be encountered while on the trail. If you are fearful, or the dog is threatening, the general rule is to try to get out of the situation calmly and quickly without making the dog any more upset.

- Try to stay calm and don't yell at the dog or scream. Don't throw anything at the dog or pick up a stick as a weapon. Many dogs are simply afraid of you and this will only make their fear worse.
- Never run from a dog as it will outrun you easily. Running triggers a dog's instinct to chase you.
- Speak to any harassing dog in a firm, calm voice. Don't smile or speak in a pleading voice. When using vocal commands, deepen your voice as much as possible.

CATTLE are a common feature on some of our walks where the hiking trails cross private land. Cattle may look intimidating but are generally quite timid. Here are some tips for dealing with cattle on your hike:

- If possible, walk around cattle not through the middle of them and don't walk between cows and their calves.
- Calves and young bullocks are very curious and may even run towards you. Continue walking normally. Don't run away. If you do this, the cattle will simply follow you. If they get too close for comfort, don't worry. Simply stand your ground, jump up and shout and they will run away again.

TICKS are tiny (1mm), spider-like blood sucking creatures which feed on many different types of animals, including humans. They are frequently found in moorland and other grassy areas, usually close to the ground, especially in moist, shaded places. Once attached ticks feed for several days and then simply drop off. Through their bite ticks can, **very rarely**, transmit a bacterial infection called Lyme disease or Borreliosis. *For information on prevention of tick bites and what to do if bitten, see www.ticktalkireland.org.*

EMERGENCY PROCEDURE

- **In case of an emergency, try to stay calm. Try to work out your exact location on the map and decide if you can help yourself out of the situation.**
- **In a genuine emergency call 112 or 999 free of charge.** The operator may ask you which service you require. For example, ambulance (*if you are near a road*), mountain rescue (*for inaccessible places*), coast guard (*near the sea*), etc.
 - You can call emergency services using any mobile/cell phone - even if does not have call credit or is locked. Simply type 112 instead of the unlock code.
 - If you do not have a phone signal it may still be possible to contact emergency services. Emergency calls can be made on *any* available mobile phone network.
 - Please keep in mind that if your phone does not have network coverage on your own network others will not be able to call you back. So, do not hang up unless directed to do so!

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The Countryside Code

While out walking in the countryside, remember you are walking in areas where people live and work. And we also share the countryside with much wildlife.

The following are a number of important recommendations to abide by when out walking:

- **Be safe - plan ahead and follow signs**
- **Leave gates and property as you find them**
- **Protect plants and animals, and take your litter home**
- **Where you are permitted to bring them, keep dogs on a lead**
- **Consider other people**

Leave No Trace

Hillwalk Tours is a proud supporter of **Leave No Trace** – an Outdoor Ethics Programme designed to promote and inspire responsible outdoor recreation through education, research, and partnerships. An ethic can be defined as knowing what the right thing to do is, and doing it, even if there is no one about to see you do it. Leave No Trace depends more on attitude and awareness than on rules and regulations.

Practising a Leave No Trace ethic is very simple: Make it hard for others to see or hear you and LEAVE NO TRACE of your visit. See <https://www.leavenotraceireland.org> for more information.

Toilets: If you need to answer 'the call of nature' and there are no facilities nearby, please take care to find a discreet spot away from the trail and any water sources. Ensure that you **Leave No Trace** of your visit, i.e. bury your waste and 'pack out' your toilet paper by bringing it with you inside a double zip-lock bag or similar. You can find more info on this at www.trailspace.com/articles/backcountry-waste-disposal.html

More from Hillwalk Tours

Did you enjoy your self-guided walk? Consider one of our walking holidays!

Hillwalk Tours was founded by Kilkenny man, James Byrne, and is based in Galway. We have been organising self-guided hillwalking tours in the Burren and other parts of Ireland, the UK and Spain for over 10 years, providing thousands of happy hiking experiences to our many loyal walkers. This walk is a perfect introduction to our other offerings that include overnight accommodation, luggage and walker transfers if required. We take care of everything so all you need to do is put one foot in front of the other along some of the most beautiful landscapes in the world!

We have over 200 walks across 20+ different trails with options to suit everyone from the part-time hiker to those with more experience.

Explore our catalogs to learn more about our exciting walking holidays. Discover the diverse range of experiences that await you on each adventure by [clicking here](#).

See our website www.hillwalktours.com for more or contact us at info@hillwalktours.com and one of our team will personally advise you.



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Hillwalk Guides Hikes in Clare

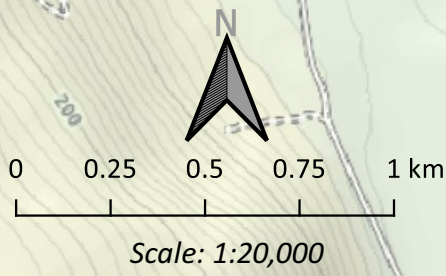
Ballyvaughan Wood Loop

Distance: 9km



Start & Finish

Ballyvaughan Quay, on the R477 coast road between Ballyvaughan and Fanore
GPS: 53.1177, -9.1525



Elevation Profile - Ballyvaughan Wood Loop



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Hillwalk Guides

Hikes in Clare

Ballyvaughan Wood Loop (Info Booklet)

Please Note:

- Please be aware that changes to the route may occur of which we are unaware.
- The approximate **'Walking Time'** is based on a moderate walking speed of 4km per hour and does not include any breaks.
- The **'Total Ascent'** is the cumulative elevation gain or climb over the entire distance of the walk.

YOUR WALK AT A GLANCE

Distance: 9km

Walking Time: 2-3 hours

Total Ascent: (↑) < 50m

Terrain: This fairly easy loop walk follows woodland paths, minor roads and green lanes. While there are almost no climbs, the surface can get a little muddy and craggy, so it's not ideal for buggies and little children. Some sections follow paved roads.

Food & Drink: Ballyvaughan

Way Marking: The waymarking for most of this walk is a purple arrow. If you are in doubt about the directions follow these markers. However, please note that the first 1.4km of the walk also follows the Burren Way spur from Ballyvaughan with its yellow 'walking man' marker.



Access & Parking: The walk starts from the Ballyvaughan end of the car park along the quay (GPS: 53.1177, -9.1525) on the R477 coast road between Ballyvaughan and Fanore.

From the trail head at the Ballyvaughan quay car park (GPS Coordinates: 53.1177, -9.1525):

- With your back to the map board for the Wood Loop follow the L5042 road (*signposted for the Wood Loop, Burren Way and the Ballyvaughan Community Field*) directly ahead, leading away from the coast.
- Follow this road past the National School and continue on a track around the GAA pitch for 130m.
- Turn right, just beyond an old wall (*opposite the sports ground changing rooms*) and follow a narrow path for 25m to a stile in a low wall.

i *On your right, beside the GAA pitch are the remains of some old walls. These are the last existing walls of the Ballyvaughan workhouse. Workhouses were introduced in Ireland in the mid-19th century as a means of providing relief for extremely poor people. They were intentionally run as uncomfortable establishments, almost like prisons, to deter any thoughts of getting an easy meal.*

Families were separated and not allowed to have contact and the inmates had to work 10 hours a day. The workhouse in Ballyvaughan had space for 500 inmates (at a time when the parish had only 250 inhabitants). It was opened in 1852 and closed in 1923. Most of its remains are now buried under the sports pitch.

- Cross the stile into the field beyond it and follow a path as it bears to the left through some bushes.
- The route now passes through a landscape of limestone pavements and hazel shrub divided by stone walls which are crossed by gaps, gates and stiles.
- Eventually a stile leads you into some hazel woodland. Follow the path through the woods and turn right after almost 100m.
- When you emerge onto some open limestone pavement follow the path to the left across the open space for 70m, until you enter some dense hazel woodland.
- After 120m, you leave the woods at the corner of field from where a path leads along the right of the field for 200m until you come to a stile in a wall. Cross onto the road here.

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Escape to Nature!

- ① *The Burren Way turns right here and, after 1 km, leads past the 16th century Newtown Castle, now part of the Burren College of Art. The castle is open to the public free of charge on most days. It is one three circular castles along the Burren Way. The Arts Café in the college serves refreshments but is often closed after lunch.*
- But to continue on the Wood Loop you should turn left instead and follow the road downhill to a T-junction with the N67.
- Turn left (*Mind the traffic!*) and then turn right, after 40m, onto the L10281, a narrow country road.
- Follow this road, which bends right, after 700m, and then narrows to a track.
- You eventually come to a gate and a stile. Cross through the stile and turn left before a ruined cottage.
- Walk along the edge of a field for 130m, keeping the hedge on your left, until you come to narrow path starting at the corner of the field.
- Cross through the old wall after 40m and turn right onto the path that leads into the woodland. Keep the wall on your right and follow the path as it winds its way through the hazel woods.
- Watch your step here as there are many hidden 'grykes' (*vertical cracks in the limestone*) amongst the moss and leaves.
- After 150m, you emerge from the dense woodland at the edge of a field. Continue straight along the edge of the field, keeping the hedge on your right until you come to a gate after 180m.
- Just beyond the gate is a stile in the wall on your right, at the beginning of a short laneway.
- Cross through the stile and follow the path through the trees for 50m until you once more emerge at the edge of a field with a wall on your left.
- Continue straight on and keep the wall on your left and the field with some trees on your right for 250m until you reach a wall and stile beside a small road.
- Cross onto the road and turn left for 250m until you come to the entrance for the Aillwee Cave and Bird of Prey Centre on your right.
- ① *The Aillwee Cave and Bird of Prey Centre invites you to go underground in Ireland's premier show cave and watch flying displays of eagles, falcons, hawks, and owls. The centre usually opens every day from 10am and closes between 5pm and 6.30pm, depending on the season. You can find more information at www.aillweecave.ie.*
- To continue towards Ballyvaughan from here, stay on the road with the entrance to the cave on your right.
- Ignore the road leading uphill on your right after 350m and instead continue for another 1.5km until you reach a sharp bend to your right.
- On your left, a track leads away from the road and towards a gate and stile after 40m. Cross the stile and follow the track beyond it for almost 500m to another gate.
- Pass through the gate and follow the small road straight ahead as it turns first right and then left until you come to a T-junction after 550m.
- Turn left here and continue for 650m to a T-junction with the N67 road where you turn left once more.
- Follow the N67 into Ballyvaughan village.
- After almost 500m you pass a supermarket on your right. There is a visitor centre and tourist information at the end of the car park behind the supermarket.
- To continue follow the main road to a T-junction and turn right onto the coast road, signposted for Fanore. The trail head, where you started your walk, is 250m ahead on the right.

After Your hike

With a nice selection of pubs, restaurants and cafes, Ballyvaughan (Baile Uí Bheacháin) is a good place for refreshments. This charming coastal village sits between the hard land of the limestone hills and a quiet leafy corner of Galway Bay. The quay, just to the north of the village dates from a time when boats traded from here with the Aran Islands and Galway, exporting grain and bacon and bringing in turf, which was a scarce commodity in the Burren. The pier, locally known as the 'Old Pier' was built between 1837 and 1877 to facilitate a growing herring fishing industry.