

The Dún Laoghaire Way

DALKEY



A video presentation of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown's rich archaeological and heritage sites is on view at Dalkey Castle & Heritage Centre Castle Street, Dalkey.

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STOP 7 Torca Cottage

On arrival at the top, turn right onto Torca Road and Torca Cottage is a short distance along on the left. It was here that the playwright and Fabian George Bernard Shaw, spent much of his childhood. The plaque on the wall reads:

*"Irish men are mortal and temporal
but her hills are eternal"*

The beautiful local scenery obviously left an impression on the writer.



STOP 8 Dalkey Hill Quarry

From Shaw's home, walk along Torca Road to the quarry, a popular area for rock-climbers. On top of the hill is the **Telegraph Semaphore Tower**, built during the Napoleonic Wars to send signals to ships in Dublin Bay by using large wooden arms. The building was castellated at a later period by Robert Warren, the local landlord, who owned the hill.

The granite quarried from the hill formed part of an important industry and was widely used in public projects, the most notable being: Dún Laoghaire Harbour, the Menai Bridge in Wales, the Embankment on the Thames in London and the Ballast Office in Dublin. The granite was transported from the quarry by a specially built funicular railway system.

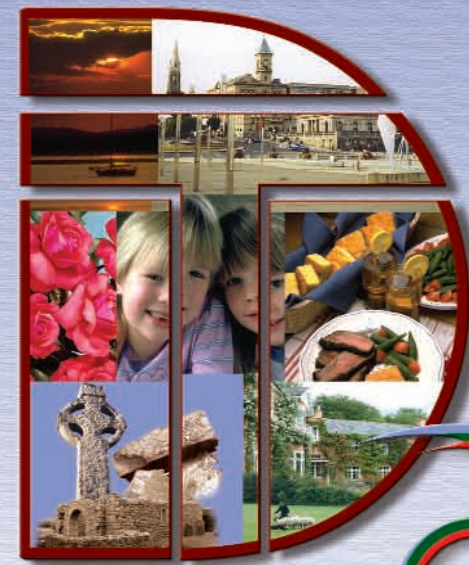
The route of the line, known as **The Metals**, is still in existence today and is used as a pedestrian walk alongside the present railway track. The walk now follows a short section of that route, which is known locally as **The Flags**. Cross the road and turn right. As you make your way towards Dalkey Avenue there are two grey stone buildings on the left. These were water pumping stations

STOP 9 Summerfield

In the early part of the century, Summerfield on Dalkey Avenue was a school, where the novelist James Joyce taught for a brief period. It is immortalised in a passage of the author's masterpiece, Ulysses. The building is now a private residence.

STOP 10 Celtic Cross

In the wall of the **railway bridge** on Dalkey Avenue is an interesting Celtic cross, used originally to mark the site of a local holy well. In earlier times, funeral corteges would go out of their way to stop at the spot so that prayers could be said for the departed. Turn right at the bottom of the hill and the route brings you back to the **centre of Dalkey**.



Published by
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Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown
Tourism

A guided walk through Dalkey's rich history



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Dalkey, a designated Heritage Town is situated at the southern end of Dublin Bay. It is famous for its literary associations, with many writers making their home here. James Joyce set chapter two of his famous novel “*Ulysses*” in Dalkey. Dalkey Island, lying off the tip of the mainland, was first inhabited around 3,500bc by Stone Age settlers.

The area has two early Christian churches dating back to the 10th century. One is on the island and the other is located in the town, access is through Dalkey Castle and Heritage Centre. Both are dedicated to the 7th century St. Begnet.

During the Middle Ages, Dalkey was the chief port for Dublin and an importance centre of commerce. It was a fortified town with six castles, built by merchants around the 14th - 15th centuries to store goods before being transported to Dublin. Two of these castles remain, Goat Castle and Archbold's Castle.

In the 16th century, Ringsend superseded Dalkey as Dublin's primary port, causing the town to go into decline. In the 19th century the town prospered again with the building of Dún Laoghaire Harbour, whose great piers were constructed with the granite quarried from Dalkey Hill (to be visited later in the walk).

The walk begins in the centre of the town.

STOP 1 Archbold's Castle

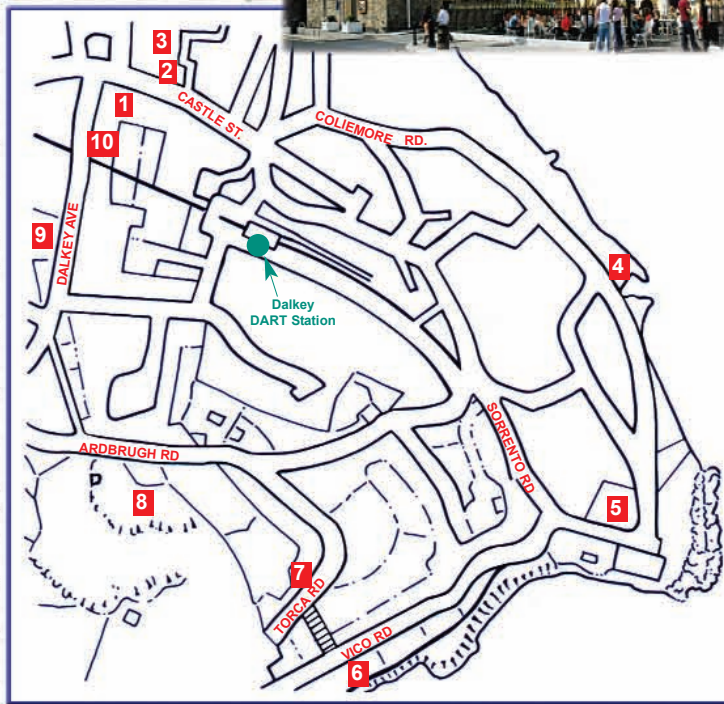


The first of two remaining castles, Archbold's Castle is situated in Castle Street, the town's main street and is in a reasonable state of repair, except for the battlements. The murder-hole that overhangs the doorway was one of the grim defenses against intruders. The town and its fortresses were frequently attacked by the Wicklow clans, the O'Byrne and O'Tooles.

STOP 2 The Heritage Centre

The Centre is on the opposite side of the road and is accessed through **Goat Castle**, which now incorporates the **Town Hall**. It is an excellent, informative starting point with exhibitions and guided tours of the medieval church and Goat's Castle. The eleventh Century church is dedicated to St. Begnet. An early Christian type cross is incised into the exterior wall.

The church was extended during the middle ages when Dalkey was at the height of its prosperity and was in use until the 17th century.



A gravestone known as a “**Rathdown**” slab was discovered in the adjoining graveyard. Carved on it is a cross within a circle, together with cup-mark and circle decorations. The slab is believed to be of Christian Viking origin and is now on display in the **Heritage Centre**.

STOP 3 Goat Castle

This castle gets its name from the demi-goat in the coat of arms of the Cheeves family who owned the buildings in the 16th century. From the battlements there is an excellent view of the surrounding town, sea and mountains. The first floor exhibition in the castle features models of Dalkey's former transport systems; the renowned atmospheric railway and a funicular railway system which brought the granite from Dalkey quarry to build Dún Laoghaire harbour. The atmospheric railway was world famous, it was established in 1884 and lasted for just ten years.

Continue your walk through the town and note the many traditional shopfronts in Castle Street and Railway Road which add to its character. The town is a popular gastronomic centre and boasts some interesting pubs. Leave the town via **Coliemore Road**.

STOP 4 Coliemore Harbour

The view from the harbour must be one of the most beautiful along the coastline. The Irish meaning of Coliemore is *Large Harbour*, which is appropriate since this was the approximate location of the medieval port serving Dublin.

Across The Sound is **Dalkey Island** where the first Stone Age settlers on the east coast made their homes at the end of the Mesolithic Period (5,000BC - 3.300BC). The small church on the island, also dedicated to St Begnet, is one of the earliest stone churches built in Ireland during the 10th century. The church is mentioned four times in the Annals, most notably in 938AD when the Abbot of Killachaidh drowned while fleeing from Vikings.

The **Martello Tower** on the summit of the Island is one of 74 which dot the Irish coastline and were built between 1801 and 1804, to resist an expected seaborne attack by Napoleon's French fleet.



STOP 5 Sorrento Park

Continue along the coast road, past Dillon Park on the shoreside, to Sorrento Park on the right. As you go up the path from the entrance, note the rather weather-beaten mosaic on the left, this is a memorial to John Dowland, a local Elizabethan poet. It is said that Dowland was a friend of Shakespeare and that the scene for Elsinore in Hamlet was based upon his description of Dalkey.

From the top of Sorrento Park there is a splendid view of the island and the Martello tower's gun batteries come into view. To the right is Killiney Bay, compared in beauty to the Bay of Naples. Overlooking you are the Dalkey and Killiney Hills. The obelisk on top of Killiney Hill is a distinctive landmark. To the south you can enjoy the magnificent views of Bray Head and the Wicklow Mountains. Immediately below is a fine example of a Georgian terrace, Sorrento Terrace. On leaving the park, go right onto Sorrento Road and then left onto **Vico Road**.

STOP 6 “Strawberry Hill”

On the left on the top of the incline is a lovely Italianate-style house, built around 1900. Observe the beautiful larger-than-life plaster version of a strawberry plant on the front wall and the attractive arched entrance under a small tower on the north side. Cross the road and ascend the 233 steps directly opposite, to Torca Road