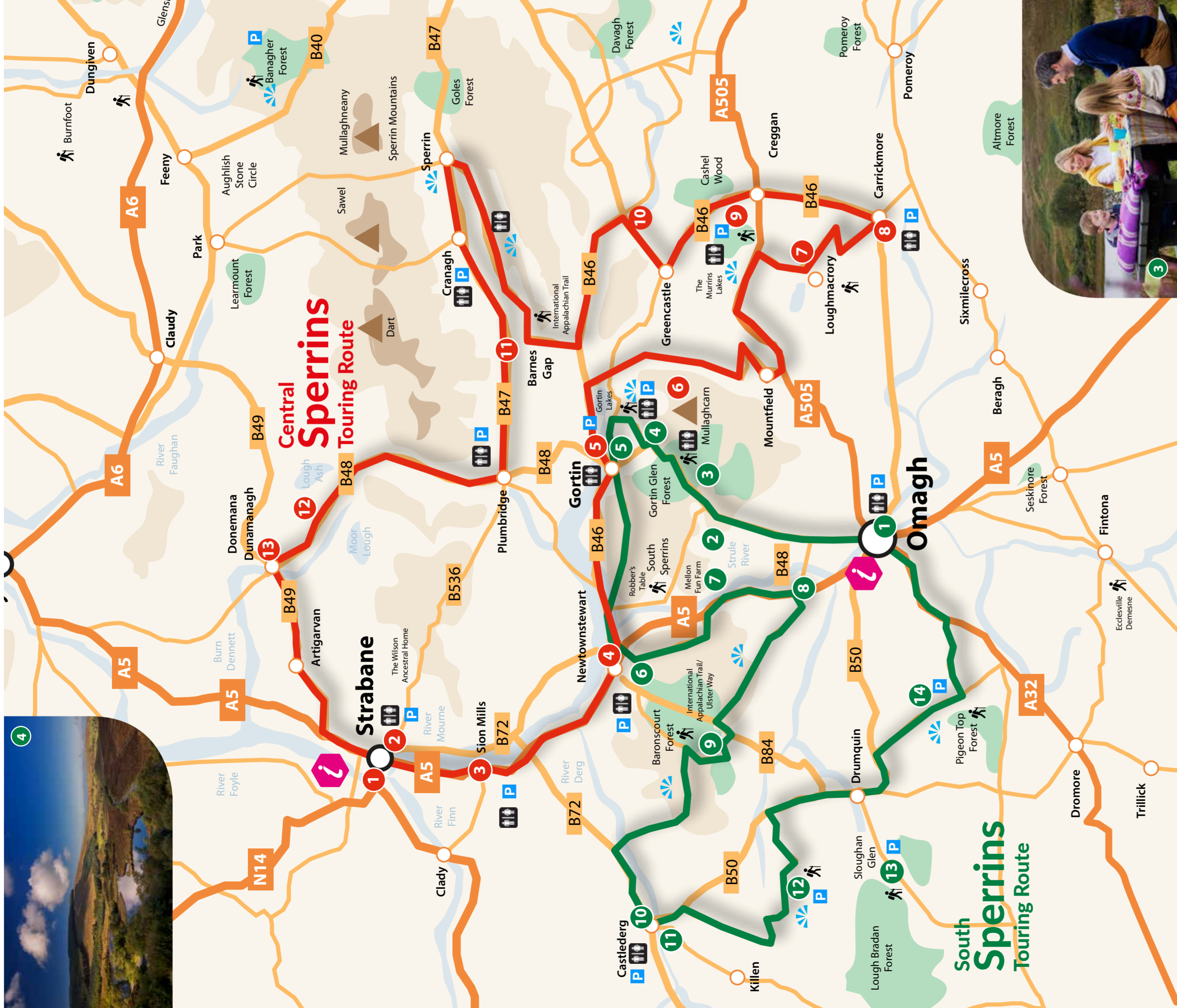


Visitor Map Sperrins Region



South Sperrins Touring Route

- 1. Omagh**
Situating at the place where the Drumragh and Camowen rivers meet to form the Strule River. Its strategic location was recognised by the O'Neills who built a castle here and it became a dedicated market town following the Plantation of Ulster in 1610. Despite a major accidental fire in 1742 which destroyed most of its buildings, it developed to become the County Town of Tyrone in 1768, taking over from Dungannon. This led to it becoming a major centre for the local administration of justice with a fine courthouse and associated gaol.
- 2. Cappagh Old Church and Graveyard**
The main body of this church dates back to the 16th Century but this site may have been used as a church site since the early Christian period. A bell associated with this parish, known as the 'Cappagh Bell', is in the National Museum of Ireland, Dublin.
- 3. Gortin Glen Forest Park**
A major recreational feature of the forest is the five-mile long drive, which offers some breathtaking views. A number of vista parks have been created where the motorist can pull in and enjoy the magnificent scenery. Also available is access to a number of walking trails.
- 4. Gortin Lakes**
These two lakes are known in geological terms as 'kettle hole' lakes left by uneven melting of glaciers. A path encircling the lakes affords spectacular vistas of the high Sperrins.



5. Gortin

Gortin is a small picturesque village nestling in the Owenkillew river valley. The village is an ideal starting point for exploring the surrounding hills and glens by bike or on foot, as well as offering welcoming hostleries to unwind after a day's exercise.

6. Harry Avery O'Neill Castle

The hills above Newtownstewart provide the setting for the majestic ruins of one of the Gaelic strongholds of the O'Neills. Although traditionally associated with Henry Ambreidh O'Neill, who died in 1392, it is not certain whether this fortification dates from the 14th or 15th century. It is an unusual structure, especially important in relation to the study of native Irish Medieval life. A visit to the nearby ruins of the Stewart Castle in Newtownstewart is also recommended.

7. Ulster American Folk Park

The Ulster American Folk Park tells the story of emigration from Ulster to America in the 18th, 19th and early 20th centuries and provides visitors with a 'living history' experience on its outdoor site. Traditional thatched buildings, American log houses, and a full-scale replica emigrant ship help to bring a bygone era back to life. The Mellon Centre for Migration Studies is also on site next to the Folk Park.



Nearby offering a variety of rare breed animals the Mellon Fun Farm is a perfect venue for a family day out or school trip. Set on a 18 acre site there is a peaceful and relaxed atmosphere down on the farm as visitors have the freedom to meet and pet many of the animals.

8. The Abingdon Collection

The Abingdon collection represents over 45 years of passionate collecting and provides an opportunity for visitors to take a 'walk in the past'. If you lived through the 50's, 60's and 70's, or just like big boy toys, then there is definitely something for you. The collection is open by appointment only. The collection is free of charge, but contributions are gratefully accepted in aid of Cancer Research UK.

9. Baronscourt Estate

Baronscourt, the home of the Duke of Abercorn family since the early 1600's, is among a handful of remaining old family estates which combine great historical and architectural interest with a landscape of outstanding natural beauty. Restricted access.

10. Davies Bawn & Park Amenity Area

Built on a site occupied at one time by an O'Neill tower house, this defended stone house commands an area of once strategic importance on the River Derg. The bawn was a refuge for planter families and was eventually rendered unfit for occupation after an attack by the O'Neills. Today's ruins consist of a rectangular bawn with the remains of 3 square flankers still visible. Local legend has it that a piper got lost forever in a forgotten passage way under the ruins and his musical laments can still be heard on still quiet nights.

11. The Derg Valley - St. Patrick

According to tradition St. Patrick travelled through the Derg Valley on returning from a period of Lenten Penitential Service at Lough Derg - one of Ireland's most prominent ecclesiastical centres. While in the area check out St. Patrick's Well - the water from which is said to cure toothache; or walk the International Appalachian Trail and discover our geological connections with North America, Europe & Africa. Persons of note associated with the area include hymn writer Cecil Frances Alexander; Davy Crockett - King of the Wild Frontier; and Joe Sheridan, the 'inventor' of Irish Coffee.

12. Bolaght Mountain

The northern slopes of Bolaght Mountain provide an excellent viewpoint from which to survey the rich diversity of the Derg Valley, the Sperrins uplands and the hills of Donegal.

13. Sloughan Glen

This pleasant woodland walk along the Blackwater River takes the visitor steadily upwards to be greeted by the roar of its waterfall thundering over a rocky edge.

14. Pigeon Top Picnic Site

This site overlooking Omagh, offers spectacular panoramic views of the region. Close by in the townland of Cavanacaw a seam of gold is being mined.

EXPLORE Omagh & The Sperrins Region

Central Sperrins Touring Route

- 1. Strabane's Heritage in Sculpture**
Dance with the 'Tinmies', 5 sculptural figures measuring some 18 feet in height and representing the region's rich tradition of music and dance; or spend a moment of reflection with Strabane's very own wishing pig 'Ambrose', named after a literary creation of Flann O'Brien, one of Strabane's most famous sons. Flann himself is also represented sculpturally, taking pride of place within Strabane's town centre.
- 2. Famous Connections**
Among the notable persons associated with Strabane are John Dunlap, printer of 'The American Declaration of Independence'; James Wilson, grandfather of U.S. President Woodrow Wilson; Sir Guy Carleton, a Governor General of Canada; Cecil Frances Alexander of 'All Things Bright & Beautiful' fame; and Annie Maumder, an accomplished astronomer who along with her husband had the 'Maumder' moon crater named in their honour. While in Strabane check out the Alley Arts & Conference Centre, Gray's Printing Press and the Wilson Ancestral Home.
- 3. Sion Mills Village**
Once known for being the home of one of the world's leading linen producers, Sion Mills today is an idyllic tree lined village rich in industrial and architectural heritage. Discover more of Sion's wonderful history on a walking tour of the village or with a visit to the Sion Stables.
- 4. Stewart Castle, Newtownstewart**
This plantation building suffered severe damage during the 1641 Insurrection and then in 1689 during King James' return from the Siege of Derry. A visit to the nearby ruins of the stronghold of Harry Avery O'Neill is also recommended.
- 5. Gortin**
Gortin is a small picturesque village nestling in the Owenkillew river valley. The village is an ideal starting point for exploring the surrounding hills and glens by bike or on foot, as well as offering welcoming hostleries to unwind after a day's exercise.
- 6. Mullaghcam**
The site on the summit of Mullaghcam is a place of great religious importance and most probably an ancient burial site.
- 7. Loughmacrory Megalithic Wedge Tomb**
is a burial chamber which has a front chamber and a doorway marked by three stones. It is believed to have been constructed around 4000 years ago. Enjoy the flora and fauna of 'Loughmacrory Lakeside Walk'. This walk is set within a beautiful, unspoilt freshwater environment with changing views of the lough from around its shoreline.
- 8. Nally Heritage Centre (St Colmille's GAA Ground)**
The centre encompasses aspects of social, economic, political, sporting and geographical history relating to the local area. This is enhanced with artefacts which span from historic times to the modern day. 'Social Life of the People' examines the impact of churches, education and housing evolution on the lives of the people from as early as the 5th century. 'Making a Living' examines the development of the transport infrastructure from earliest times. Farming is also accorded special recognition to acknowledge its dominance for centuries in parish life.
- 9. An Creagán Centre**
Distinctively designed to mirror the archaeology of the area and gives you the opportunity to step back in time. It also houses an interpretative exhibition and offers archaeological, environmental and cultural guided tours of the surrounding area.
- 10. Aghascrebagh 'Ogham' Stone**
This is one of the very few 'ogham' stones in Northern Ireland. The marks on the edges of this stone are characters from an alphabet that was used in medieval Ireland. The 25-letter alphabet was supposedly inspired by Ogma, god of eloquence.
- 11. The Glenelly Valley**
Carved by the glacial flows of the Ice Age this diverse and stunning landscape features picturesque walking and cycling routes, peaceful picnic sites, and mysterious archaeological remains which add to the enchantment of the region. Check out Bodoney Church, Glenroy Portal Tomb, and Clogherney Wedge Tomb.
- 12. Loughash Wedge Tomb**
Sample something of the Sperrins' prehistoric past with a visit to this ancient burial chamber. The entrance, which faces west, has a double portal arrangement leading to a single burial chamber where it is believed 3 individuals were interred.
- 13. Donemana/Dunamanagh Village**
A quiet country village nestling among wooded hillsides and providing an opportunity to sample something of our rural heritage. Take a small detour and visit Barrontop Fun Farm or the Mill Pottery.

