

# The Western way



Sif an Iarthair



Your adventure pass to the Western Way



FRONT COVER  
FOLD/SCORE

**1 OUGHTERARD TO MAUM**

**START**

**WALK INFORMATION**

**OUGHTERARD TO MAUM**

START OUGHTERARD (PUBLIC CARPARK)  
FINISH MAUM  
DISTANCE 24 KILOMETRES  
HEIGHT GAINED 130 METRES  
DURATION 6 - 8 HOURS

O/S maps 1:50000 numbers 45 and 38

**DIRECTIONS**  
The trail begins in Oughterard and follows the lough Corrib shoreline for some ten kilometres north west toward Maum. A few kilometres beyond Doon Rock the trail enters a forestry plantation and for the first time the sensation of remoteness will be experienced. The R336 brings the hiker over the pass and down toward Maum. The trail turns west 300 metres south of Maum Bridge.

**FEATURES**  
Lough Corrib to the east of the trail is one of Ireland's great lakes. It is the second largest lake in Ireland at 176 km<sup>2</sup>. In places it is 47 metres deep. Wildlife in and about Lough Corrib includes hawks, otters, mink, stoat, frogs, and bats. Freshwater trout and salmon are fished for in the lake.

FOLD/SCORE

**2 MAUM TO LEENAUN**

**WALK INFORMATION**

**MAUM TO LEENAUN**

START MAUM  
FINISH LEENAUN  
DISTANCE 29 KILOMETRES  
HEIGHT GAINED 540 METRES  
DURATION 6 - 9 HOURS

O/S maps 1:50000 numbers 37, 38 and 44

**DIRECTIONS**  
From Maum the trail follows a minor road that leads to Maumeen. At Maumeen the trail loops away to follow the western slopes of the Maumturk mountains. The Twelve Bens mountain range forms the western border of the Glen Inagh. While the trail skirts the western slopes of the Maumturk Mountains, eventually it loops around the northern slopes of the Maumturk mountains before reaching Leenaun along an old coach road.

**FEATURES**  
Maum Ean is a place of pilgrimage; the pilgrimage may have evolved from pre-Christian times in honour of the God, Lugh, who was honoured at Lughnasa. It is said that St. Patrick stood here and about Lough Corrib. There is a small church, a holy well and a statue of Patrick to remind one of the significance of this place in Irish Christianity.

FOLD/SCORE

**3 LEENAUN TO AASLEAGH**

**WALK INFORMATION**

**LEENAUN TO AASLEAGH**

START LEENAUN  
FINISH AASLEAGH  
DISTANCE 3.5 KILOMETRES  
HEIGHT GAINED 50 METRES  
DURATION 1 HOUR

O/S map 1:50000 number 37

**DIRECTIONS**  
Leenaun nestles at the foot of the Maumturk mountains at the head of the Killary. From here the Western Way follows the N59 for 2.5 kilometres to the County Mayo border at Aasleagh. Please take care as this is a National route.

**FEATURES**  
The name Leenaun means the shallow sea bed, somewhat ironic as it sits at the head of the Killary fjord and fjords are renowned for their depth. The Killary is 16 kilometres long and 45 metres deep in places. Leenaun is a haven for geologists due to its great variety of sedimentary, volcanic and metamorphic rocks. Today the hiker will see mussel rafts and salmon cages floating on the fjord.

FOLD/SCORE

**4 AASLEAGH TO SHEEFFRY**

**WALK INFORMATION**

**AASLEAGH TO SHEEFFRY**

START AASLEAGH  
FINISH SHEEFFRY  
DISTANCE 12 KILOMETRES  
HEIGHT GAINED 200 METRES  
DURATION 3 - 4 HOURS

O/S maps 1:50000 numbers 37 and 38

**DIRECTIONS**  
Aasleagh Falls are in County Mayo. The Western Way passes between The Devilsmother to the south and the imposing Ben Gorm to the North West. The Eriff valley opens up as the trail follows alongside the river for some 5 kilometres to Houston's bridge. Thereafter the way passes through conifer plantations to reach Sheeffry. This part of The Western Way follows the river and forestry roads.

**FEATURES**  
The Eriff River is a major feature of this section of the trail; Aasleagh Falls can be spectacular when there is a flood on the river for it is a spate river. The river is renowned for its salmon fishery and Aasleagh lodge was once owned by the Marquise of Sligo.

FOLD/SCORE

**5 SHEEFFRY TO WESTPORT**

**WALK INFORMATION**

**SHEEFFRY TO WESTPORT**

START SHEEFFRY  
FINISH WESTPORT  
DISTANCE 25 KILOMETRES  
HEIGHT GAINED 430 METRES  
DURATION 6 TO 8 HOURS

O/S 1:50000 numbers 31, 37 and 38

**DIRECTIONS**  
From Sheeffry the Western Way follows a quiet road through Drummin and for another 5 kms before turning north across bogland and forestry roads to the south of Croagh Patrick. Once across the eastern shoulder of Croagh Patrick the trail follows the coastline into the town of Westport.

**FEATURES**  
The Sheeffry Mountains mean the Hills of the Wraiths, or ghosts or spectres. Drummin village is typical of so many small scattered communities that the Western Way passes through, a church and a pub remains. The post office is closed as are the few shops that survived until the 1960's. The underlying rock here is a grit stone formed about 485 million years ago. The northern vista is dominated by Croagh Patrick, a quartzite cone. The path to the summit is well worn by the annual visit of thousands of pilgrims. The Reek as it is called locally is 765 m high. The trail touches the calm inner limits of Clew Bay before reaching Westport town.

FOLD/SCORE

**6 WESTPORT TO NEWPORT**

**WALK INFORMATION**

**WESTPORT TO NEWPORT**

START WESTPORT  
FINISH NEWPORT  
DISTANCE 15 KILOMETRES  
HEIGHT GAINED 50 METRES  
DURATION 2-3 HOURS

O/S map 1:50000 number 31

**DIRECTIONS**  
The Western Way shares the Great Western Greenway along the old railway line to Newport. This is a dual cycling and walking trail.

**FEATURES**  
Westport is a planned town dating to the 18th century. To the north of Westport the way crosses the undulating landscape caused by the dumping of huge masses of glacial material. The soil is quite rich and grass grows well making for good pasture and hay. The slopes are well drained but the valleys between betray their wetness by the presence of rushes, Purple Loosestrife and Yellow Flags. The trail follows the old railway line between Westport and Newport. This line opened in 1894 and closed in 1937.

FOLD/SCORE

**7 NEWPORT TO LETTERKEEN**

**WALK INFORMATION**

**NEWPORT TO LETTERKEEN**

START NEWPORT  
FINISH LETTERKEEN  
DISTANCE 13 KILOMETRES  
HEIGHT GAINED 160 METRES  
DURATION 3 - 4 HOURS

O/S map 1:50000 numbers 23 and 31

**DIRECTIONS**  
From Newport the trail follows the N59 national route for a kilometre out of the town and turning north follows minor roads and tracks to Letterkeen forest. To the west of the trail are Loughs Furnace and Feeagh, while the Nephin Mountain range looms ahead.

**FEATURES**  
Newport was founded in the early years of the 18th century. The intention was to create a linen town. A community of Quaker weavers were among its first inhabitants. Bleachyard is a local townland name that derives from that initiative. The town nestles at the mouth of the Black Oak River. A small but scenic townscape awaits the hiker. The old railway viaduct dates from the late 19th century.

FOLD/SCORE

**8 LETTERKEEN TO DERRY**

**WALK INFORMATION**

**LETTERKEEN TO DERRY**

START LETTERKEEN  
FINISH DERRY  
DISTANCE 13 KILOMETRES  
HEIGHT GAINED 120 METRES  
DURATION 3 - 5 HOURS

O/S map 1:50000 numbers 23 and 31

**DIRECTIONS**  
Through Letterkeen the trail makes its way along the eastern slopes of the Nephin Mountains on forestry tracks before emerging at Derry. As this is a dedicated wilderness area the trail will deteriorate over time. Please take care.

**FEATURES**  
This is one of the largest forestry plantations in Ireland and is part of a designated wilderness area. The main tree species are Lodgepole Pine, and Sitka Spruce with some Japanese Larch. The first plantings were made in 1951. It covers an area of 4,843 hectares. The main soil type of the forest is blanket bog of varying depth.

FOLD/SCORE

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For further information or feedback on the trail contact the **Rural Recreation officer:**

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BACK COVER  
FOLD/SCORE

