# Dingle Way GPS Waypoints & Take-Along Guide

This report primarily describes a comprehensive set of GPS waypoints and a companion hard copy guide (called the Take-Along Guide) for Ireland's Dingle Way. The report also lists various how-to information to organized a Dingle Way walk, and it presents highlights from my May 2011 walk.

The waypoints encompass a five day walk for most of the Dingle Way traveling in a clockwise manner, a walk which chiefly skirts the Dingle Peninsula coastline. The walk starts from the village of Camp in the northeast with overnights in Anascaul and Dingle along the south, Dunquin along the west, and Ballydavid and Cloghane along the north. I recommend using these GPS waypoints and the Take-Along Guide (described herein) in conjunction with a proper set of maps of the path, one that uses the Irish grid and coordinate system.
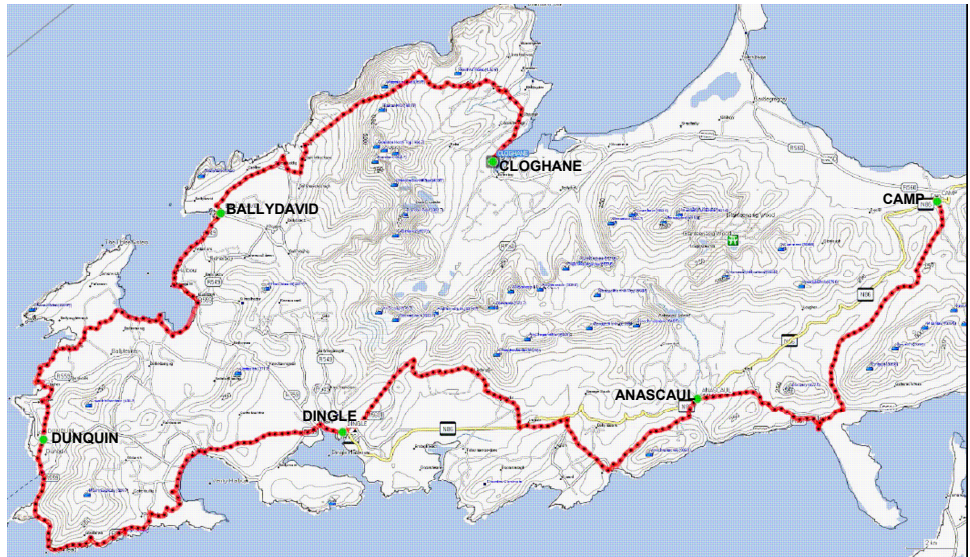
Minard Castle

Baaaah

Of course a good quality GPS is important. On my walk I carried a Garmin 60C GPS with downloaded maps. The GPS was always attached to my daypack strap for easy access and was always turned on. In addition to the GPS, downloaded maps, and sheet maps, I also carried the Take-Along Guide to reference GPS waypoint IDs with directional instructions, and the mapset I used was *The Discovery Series* (1:50,000 scale) from Ireland's Ordnance Survey (maps 70 and 71) which I two-sided, color, photo-copied and then inserted into a waterproof Ortlieb brand (9"x11") map carrier for easy access. I found the combination trustworthy, it kept me on track and helped me to quickly return to path when I misstepped.

I can't help but recommend carrying a good quality GPS. A GPS that does not have capacity to hold sufficient waypoints or one with poor satetilite tracking capabilities is probably not up the job for a serious walk. Nonetheless, these less than ideal GPS units can still be valuable as long as you understand their limitations. One morning while on another long walk I awoke to thick fog that severly hampered visibility especially as I gained elevation. At one point my GPS confirmed I had passed a turnoff into the woods. So I retraced my steps to a point where

my GPS indicated the waypost should be, and there the nearly hidden, thick-fog-shrouded waypost guided me to that turn. That following evening I learned at my B&B that a group of walkers lost there way in that day's fog to the extent that they arrived very late into the night to worried B&B hosts. Again, I can't help but recommend carrying a good quality GPS or for that matter any GPS where you can at least spot check your position to a map just in case you misstep, it may save your life.

Dingle Harbour

The waypoints described here identify the main route, numerous alternate paths, and many points of interest. These waypoints were adapted from track-logs by others [see reference list below] and verified by my walking the path. These waypoints and the associated Take-Along Guide (a) use independent waypoint ID prefixes to identify the main route (**D**nnn) from common alternate paths (**A**nnn or **B**nnn) and adds numerous points of interest (**C**nnn), (b) uses unique GPS display icons to more easily demark alternate paths and points of interest from the main path, (c) includes descriptions with heading directions such as N (north), S, E, W, (d) includes elevations, and (e) provides a hard copy of pertinent waypoint data that is expected to be used as a Take-Along Guide with your GPS.

Ballinrannig Standing Stone

About the Files:

File	Description
How & where to get	It is recommended that these files be downloaded using your browser's *save link as* option rather than just clicking on the link. The files are available from the website of www.wildtramper.com.
DingleWaypoints.zip	All of the following files packaged into a single *.zip file.
DingleWaypoints.pdf	This file.
DingleWaypoints.gpx	GPS waypoint files for the Dingle Way starting from the village of Camp walking clockwise through villages Anascaul, Dingle, Dunquin, Ballydavid, and then over Mount Brandon to the village of Cloghane. This set includes waypoints of the main path, several alternate paths, and numerous points of interest.
DingleWaypointsGuide.pdf aka *The Take Along Guide*	Consolidated waypoint list which is intended to be printed double-sided, then clear-plastic laminated, and then sliced into 2 inch wide columns to be used as a Take-Along Guide for use with your GPS.
DingleWaypointsReport.txt	A readable text file of waypoints and miscellaneous information. It is a spreadsheet which can be imported into MS Excel. The tab-delimited report has column heading: # (reference number), WP (waypoint ID), WGS-Lat (WGS-84 latitude), WGS-Lon (WGS-84 longitude), Elev (elevation), IRISH-Grid, KM (accumulated kilometers), Grade (approximate % grade), and Description.
DingleWaypoints.txt	The primary waypoint input data which is used by software utility makegpx.exe to create: (1) GPS waypoint *.gpx file, (2) Waypoint report (text) file, and (3) Waypoint PDF Take-Along Guide.

Details:

All total, this waylist version for the Dingle Way includes more than 250 waypoints: 152 along the main route, 13 alternate paths comprising 63 waypoints, and 21 waypoints demarking points-of-interest.

In addition to the GPS *.gpx waypoint file, a PDF file of handy waypoint information makes a useful Take-Along Guide to supplement the GPS. It is intended to be printed double-sided, then clear-plastic laminated, and then sliced into 2 inch wide columns to be carried as a quick reference with your GPS.

WP KM	IRISH	Elev %	DW: Camp-Cloghane Description -1-
D001 0.0	E0:6961 N1:0934	66	Camp Cross (N86 @ St Mary's Church), head S
C001	E0:6959 N1:0935	66	James Ashe Bar
D002 1.0	E0:6982 N1:0840	92 3%	Bear R, head SW
D003 3.3	E0:6865 N1:0663	231 7%	Turn L, head SE (Maumnahaltora)
D004 3.9	E0:6866 N1:0612	220 -2%	Curve R to W
D005 4.9	E0:6777 N1:0589	186 -4%	Slight curve L to SW

The GPS waypoint file is called *DingleWaypoints.gpx*. It uses four categories of IDs represented by four GPS icon display symbols: Main Dingle Way waypoints (**D**nnn) are identified with a red flag, alternate (**A**nnn) path waypoints with a blue flag, alternate (**B**nnn) path waypoints with a green flag, and points-of-interest (**C**nnn) waypoints with a blue pin. Points-of-interest may be historic, or certain on-route pubs/dining, or lodging.

Although GPS *.gpx files are always specified with the WGS-84 (World Geodetic Standard, 1984) datum in decimal-degree longitude-latitude, the table of the Take-Along Guide uses the Irish grid system to coordinate with hard copy maps of the Dingle Way. Therefore, you should configure your GPS to the Irish grid system. Additionally, when you arrive at the start of the Dingle Way, you should instruct your GPS that this is a new location so that it will more quickly synchronize with satellites.

Clogher Beach & Bay

The table for the Take-Along Guide identifies the waypoint path in four column slices. The first column identifies the waypoint ID (**WP**) followed by the accumulated distance in kilometers (**KM**). The second column identifies the **IRISH** grid to a resolution of 10x10 meters. The third column identifies the **Elev**ation in meters as extracted from Google Earth followed by a very approximate +/- **%** incline, so an incline of say 2% relates to a gentle rise in elevation, while an incline of say -30% implies a very steep loss in elevation probably with zigzags along the path. The forth column is a **Description**.

The description field is generally concise. Heading directions are abbreviated as single letters of *N*, *S*, *E*, *W* or compound directions such as *ESE*. Turning right or left use letters *R* and *L*. While *w/* means *with*, e.g. *Bear R, head NE w/wall on right* interprets as Bear right, head northeast with wall on right.

Alternate Paths:

Cliff Walk near Clogher Bay

When I walked the Dingle Way I often chose alternate paths, and the waypoint file contains many such alternatives. The alternate paths I walked are identified with an asterisk * in the **Set** number column of the table below. It is worthwhile to note that for the paths I did not walk those waypoints I could not later confirm with my GPS tracks, rather they have been confirmed as much as possible with Google Earth. If you find any significant discrepancies, please contact me (preferably supported with a GPS track list) at info@wildtramper.com so the waypoints can be corrected.

Set	Waypoint IDs	Description
1	A009-A015	Sammy's Cafe on Inch Beach
2	A028-A029	Lugnapappul, 3 standing stones
3	A070-A074	Rahinnane Castle
4	A082-A090	Fort Dunbeg and Beehive Huts antiquities (and The Stonehouse Cafe)
5	B085-B087	Optional high path return for Fort Dunbeg and Beehive Hut antiquities
6	A095-A097	Coumeenole Beach near Slea Head
7	A100	Village of Dunquin
8	A108-A118	Stupendous Cliff Walk, a must visit
9	A121	Ballinranning Standing Stone
10	B125-B128	Reasc Monastic Sites
11	A129-A134	Gallarus Oratory
12	B131-B134	Kilmalkedar Antiquity Sites (3 sites)
13	A144-A146	Monument to Saint Brendan (6th century), a must visit, see box below

Maps and Reference Guides:

1) The primary reference for sheet maps were from Ireland's Ordnance Survey (www.osi.ie), Discovery Series, 1:50,000 scale. Map sets 70 and 71 encompass the entire Dingle Peninsula and route (and this route is clearly identified in the Rucksack Readers reference, see below). You might want to highlight the Dingle Way route for easier readability. With this done, I double-sided, color, photo-copied 8-1/2"x11" map sections to carry as a reference on my walk which I placed in a waterproof Ortlieb brand (9"x11") map carrier for easy access.

2) My GPS was downloaded with Irish contour maps. Although these maps should be available through your GPS manufacturer, I chose to use free open source maps (from http://talkytoaster.info/ukmaps.htm) and I found these maps were both detailed and reliable.

3) Rucksack Readers publishes "The Dingle Way," available from EastWest Mapping (www.eastwestmapping.ie). This is both map and guide, however the maps sadly have no grid reference.

Noteworthy:

For the most part I followed the official Dingle Way route. However, there were several alternate paths I chose to walk, and often these were a day's highlight. The following is my noteworthy list where reference to these diversions are identified by waypoint ID, e.g. (A129-A134) Gallarus Oratory.

Beehive Hut

- On my walk from Camp to Anascaul, I diverted to Sammy's Cafe along Inch Beach, (A009-A015), a place where I had relaxing lunch overlooking the wild and wicked surf. This locale was one of the beaches (along with Slea Head) where in 1970 the movie Ryan's Daughter was filmed, a story which takes place in an isolated village on the Dingle Peninsula during WWI. I still remember the stunning cinematography of that fabulous and treacherous, Oscar winning, night scene with the beach landing of numerous oar-boats.

- Dingle was a delightful town to visit. It boasts some 60 plus pubs and has numerous excellent restaurants. At Doyle's Seafood Restaurant (www.doylesofdingle.ie) I savored my best meal while in Ireland. I had a layover day while in Dingle, and I had hoped to take the ferry to the nearby Great Basket Island,

Coumeenoole Beach near Slea Head

but foul weather meant the ferries weren't running. Rather, I walked around town visiting shops in full rain gear, and was happy to know that I was not walking the track.

- On my walk from Dingle to Dunquin, I diverted from the main route walking along R559 rather than the higher ridge track so as to visit Fort Dunbeg and the Beehive Huts, (A082-A090). Near Fort Dunbeg I took a well deserved lunch break and discovered The Stone House Cafe, (C083), enjoying its relaxing atmosphere and excellent food. Later that day I explored Coumeenole Beach, (A095-A097). I believe this beach was also used in the filming of the 1970 movie Ryan's Daughter as I had learned a few days earlier at Sammy's Cafe along Inch Beach.

Gallarus Oratory

- On my walk from Dunquin to Ballydavid I was treated, and let me make this perfectly clear, to my most favorite section of the Dingle Way. Near Clogher is a wonderful cliff walk (A018-A118) which rambles along the water's edge on pleasant meadowland. Later that day I diverted to view the Gallarus Oratory (A129-A134), a wonderful antiquity. Nearby were several other antiquities (Reasc Monastic Site and Kilmalkedar Antiquity Sites), but with too few hours in the day and too many kilometers already walked, compromises were made.

Sheep Herder's Cabin & Rain Shelter

- The highlight of my last day of walk was a visit to the monument of 6th century Saint Brendan (A144-A146), see box below. The monument is near the Brandon Creek outlet, also worth viewing.

- It was not what I really hoped for on my last day of walking the Dingle Way over Mount Brandon. The route started at sea level, climbed 650 meters to the saddle near Mount Brandon, and then down again to the village of Cloghane and its idealic bay. It was just an average day, that is my recent Irish holiday average, of weather with lots of wind, cloudy skies, and threats of rain. The climb up was not difficult and the route was well marked, but the track was an endless bog. Up about half way what views there were disappeared in an endless sea of fog and mist. Further up the blustery winds changed to torrents and the visibility reduced to about 50 meters, but fortunately the wind was to my back. I was a happy man as I reached the saddle for then I expected the wind and rain and cold to subside as I descended, but of course it just got worse. My first clue of something amiss was the waypost at the top pointing in a direction that had to be over a cliff. Certainly that must have been a mistake, so I meandered over to the cliff edge only to find numerous wayposts lining the fall line on the other side. *Oh shit!* Thankfully, I was wearing full rain gear and gaiters, and had a good walking stick. While the track seemed deadly steep, the entire path down fortunately had adequate footing - the rocks weren't

Cloghane Bay
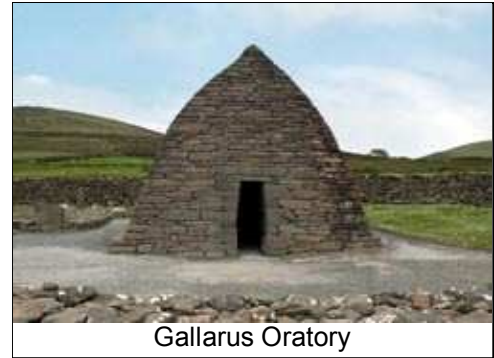
slippery and the mud was only boot top deep (but my gaiters handled that). Hurricane gusts of wind at my back often made me feel like I would fly (and die) on my journey down. I only slipped twice as the mud sometimes didn't hold, so my rain gear became patterned in brown and of course my gloves got trashed. Halfway down at about 300 meter elevation the track leveled off at the site of what appeared to be a sheep herder's cabin and rain shelter (C155). My day ended at O'Connor's Bar and Guesthouse (C167) with a well deserved pint of Guinness and a fine dinner.

So you must now be asking yourself, *do I dare tackle Mount Brandon?* I too asked that question the night before as I was concerned about the weather. In retrospect, I would split the day from Dunquin to Ballydavid in two so as to enjoy more of the antiquities along this section of the route (such as Reasc Monastic Site and Kilmalkedar Antiquity Sites), and then end the walk before tackling Mount Brandon.

Lodging and Gear Transfer:

The best source for lodging and gear transfer along the Dingle Way is www.dingleway.net. Rather, on my walk I used a service to organize my lodging and gear transfer, but I thought many of their choices deficient especially when I had needless 1-2 km walks off-track to lodging when on-track lodging was readily available. I therefore cannot recommend that service, Footfalls Walking Holidays. There are, of course, many other services which can arrange Irish walks, and if you choose to use one of these I suggest that you confirm that the lodging they select for you is near village centers where an assortment of bars and restaurants might be and that the lodging is also nearby the walking track.

From my walk I can recommend three lodgings:
- Finglas House, www.finglashouse.com, located on the track in Camp.
- O'Connors Bar and Guesthouse, www.cloghane.com, located on the track in Cloghane.
- Although I didn't stay here, I did enjoy a fine dinner at Gorman's Clifftop House near Ballydavid, www.gormans-clifftophouse.com, and believe it would be an fine place to stay.

Google Earth:

When planning your trip, you may find it useful to view the path via Google Earth (a free software download). With Google Earth, you can upload the *.gpx waypoint file to view the terrain. If you plan to customize the waypoint list, Google Earth is a valuable tool.

Customized *.gpx Files:

For the adventurous you can modify the waypoint list to create your own *.gpx GPS waypoint file or a new *.pdf guide file or a new *.txt report file. The author created a Windows command line utility called makegpx.exe. It converts a text file with lines of space/tab delimited {WaypointID Longitude Latitude [OptionalElevation] Description} into a *.gpx file and/or *Guide.pdf file and/or *Report.txt file. Get this tool from www.wildtramper.com.

Notes and References:

The Wildtramper would like to thank those who preceded him to help generate this waypoint file. Hopefully this version will find wide acceptance and some future trampers will improve upon this work.

Monument to Saint Brendan
As posted at the monument: *St. Brendan, Patron Saint of the Diocese of Kerry, was born in the year 484 AD. Tradition has it that together with 14 monks he planned to bring the Gospel to the unknown Continent to the West. Having prepared, by Prayer and Fasting, for forty days on Mount Brandon, he set sail from Brandon Creek around the year 535 AD. It took seven years for the monks to reach America across uncharted waters. The story of his voyage is recounted in The Medieval Manuscript "**Navigatio Sancti Brendani Abbatis.**" St. Brendan died at Annaghdown, County Galway in the year 578 AD and is buried at Clonfert, County Galway.*

St. Brendan described his route as via the Isle of Sheep, The Paradise of Birds, The Isle of Smiths, The Land of Crystal Pillars, Through the Region of Fog to the Promised Land. 1400 years later Tim Severin recognised these 'Stepping Stones' of his route as The Hebrides, The Faroes, Iceland, Greenland, Newfoundland and America.

1) Much of the primary reference for waypoints were track files obtained from www.wikiloc.com.

2) A description of Irish Grid can be found from Ireland's Ordnance Survey at www.osi.ie.

3) Elevations were extracted from Google Earth.

4) The accumulated distance values in the table was obtained by first using the Irish grid northing and easting values along with the Google Earth's elevation to generate (x,y,z) coordinates. The distance between these coordinates were then calculated and accumulated. The result yielded a total distance of about 9% less than the expected. Hence, the values in the table were then tweaked higher.

5) The % incline values in the table was calculated as the straight line slope between adjacent waypoints. Because the waypoints are often distant from each other, the incline values are at best approximate. Large incline values, certainly those greater than 15%, generally mean steep slopes and maybe a path between the waypoints with zigzags or switchbacks to make the elevation gain or loss more tolerant.