

3.8 Sneem → Kenmare

An tSnaidhm → Neidín

74 75 76 77 79

Distance 33.2 km 20.6 miles

Terrain minor road, vehicle tracks and woodland paths to the main road; tracks and paths, short stretch of minor road to Blackwater Bridge; forest tracks and paths; minor roads, hill and forest tracks, then paths into Kenmare

Grade relatively minor undulations; easy ascent then down to Blackwater Bridge; steepish crossing of Lacka Hill spur; short descent, then climb over Gortamullin (total ascent 510 m)

Food and drink Sneem, Kenmare (wide choice)

Summary a long, strenuous day with a strong coastal flavour and leafy woodland interludes, finishing with two very scenic hills



- From North Square on the western side of town, follow the main road, then cross the pedestrian bridge over the Sneem River to South Square. Bear left to its far corner where the Way leaves it along a lane through woodland. (The Kerry Geopark Information Centre is just to your right.)
- After 300 m, it veers right and after a further 650 m it reaches a junction where you turn left. Go straight on at the next junction, then drop down, cross a small stream and regain height on a minor road.
- Along the next 2.2 km, the Way follows undulating tracks through Parknasilla Wood and adjacent moorland, passing an unexpected art gallery, the Brushwood Studios, at km 133.7.
- Some 3.5 km beyond Sneem, reach the N70 main road and turn left. Escape from it after 650 m by turning right on a minor road.
- After 180 m, turn left along a tree-lined gravel road. The next 2.4 km may be somewhat overgrown in places, but the Way continues ENE all the way to Tahilla. Follow in turn a short stretch of minor road, a grassy track and a gravel road. Go straight across a minor crossroads along an indistinct stretch of about 250 m, to a gravel track.

Between Tahilla River and Blackwater Bridge

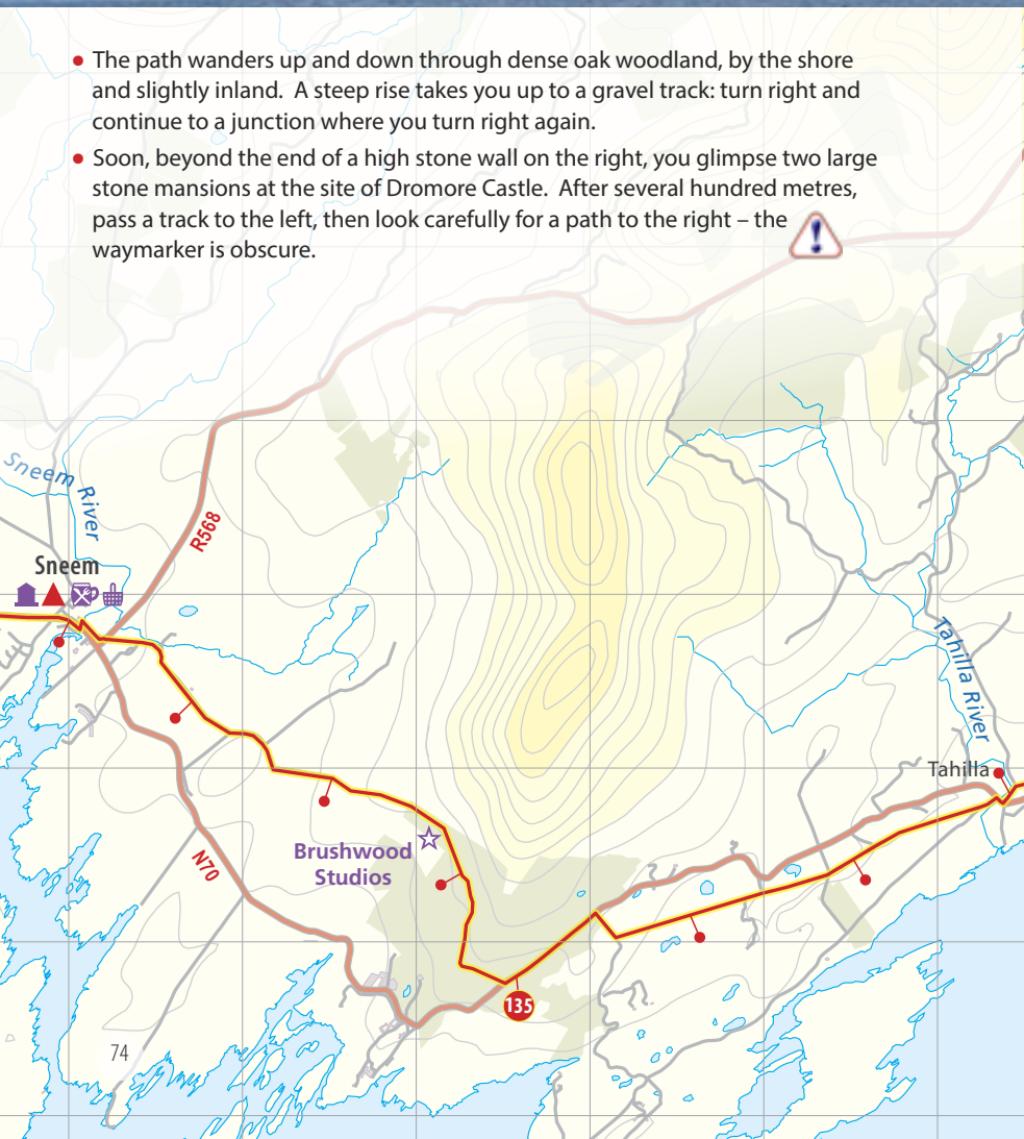


- Cross a house access road and follow a narrow path through gorse. Descend slightly to a large gate. After 100 m, climb a stile to a tree-lined track that may be boggy. Descend, bearing left to a minor road, which you follow briefly to a junction by St Patrick's Church and the Tahilla River.
- Make a right-left dogleg along to gain a minor road (signposted to Glencar). After 80 m, turn right off it and soon you're walking on a path parallel to the main road below. Ignore minor paths to the right and left in the woodland.
- Emerging into the open, pass a slender lake on the left (km 139.3). The track soon widens through woodland, then rises to cross a broad moorland saddle. Descend gradually to a stile by a gate and go on to a minor road.
-  • This takes you past several large homes in spacious grounds. After 650 m of minor road, turn left up a narrow road. Beware: this waymarker is easily missed.
- The road climbs and swings right, soon becoming a gravel track. After a total of 750 m from the left turn, leave this track on a slight left bend at km 142.6. Descend across boggy ground, then go up a sparsely waymarked path to reach a saddle.
- From a height of 110 m, follow posts downhill, across a stile and along a clear path into woodland. Continue the descent with left and right turns to a large stile.
- About 30 m further on you reach a vehicle track. Go left down to a stile, then right along a minor road that within 400 m reaches Blackwater Bridge on the N70.
- Continue south along the main road for about 80 m looking for a waymarker pointing right. Follow it, and go left along a forest path just below the road that affords occasional dramatic views across Kenmare Bay to the Beara peninsula.

Blackwater Bridge



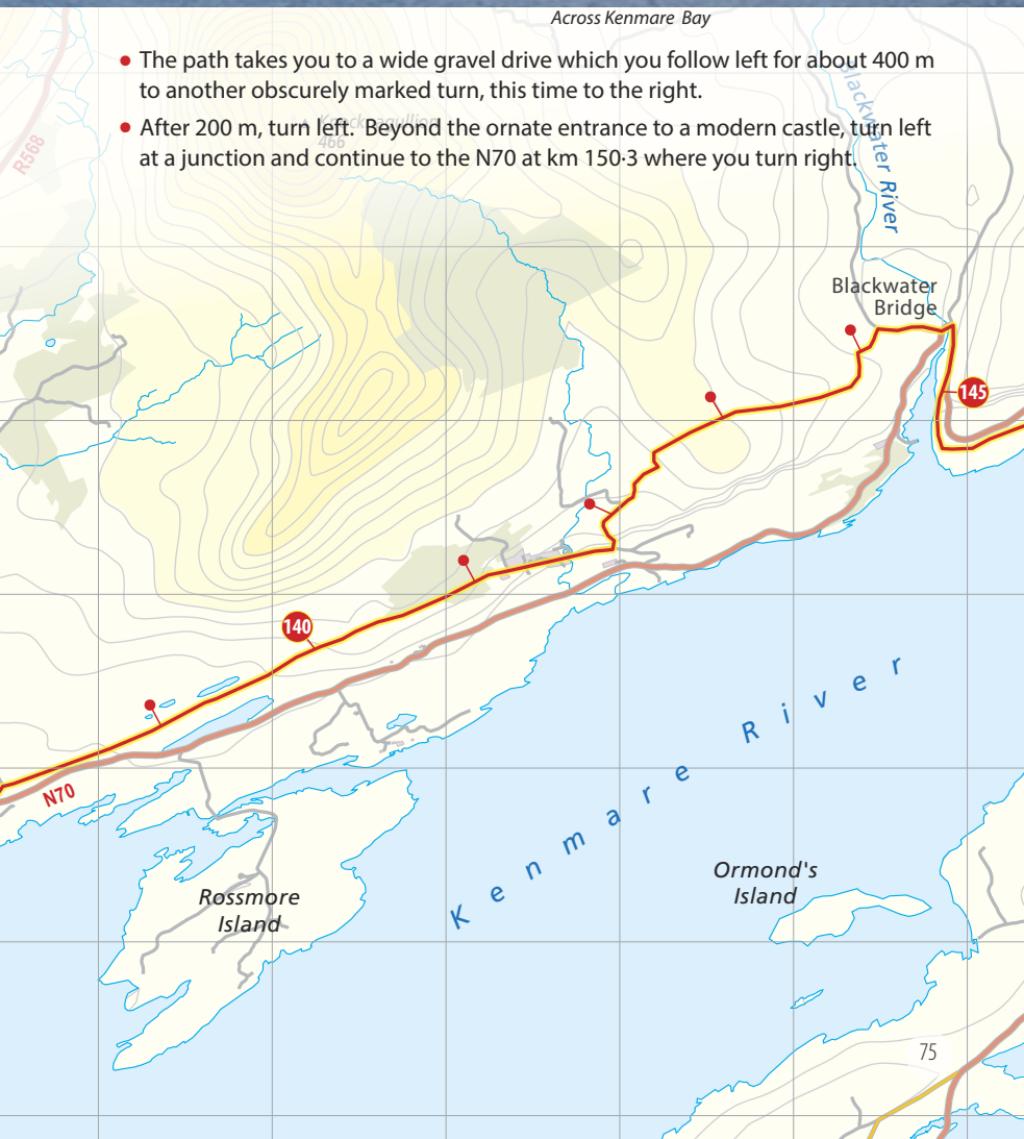
- The path wanders up and down through dense oak woodland, by the shore and slightly inland. A steep rise takes you up to a gravel track: turn right and continue to a junction where you turn right again.
- Soon, beyond the end of a high stone wall on the right, you glimpse two large stone mansions at the site of Dromore Castle. After several hundred metres, pass a track to the left, then look carefully for a path to the right – the waymarker is obscure.





Across Kenmare Bay

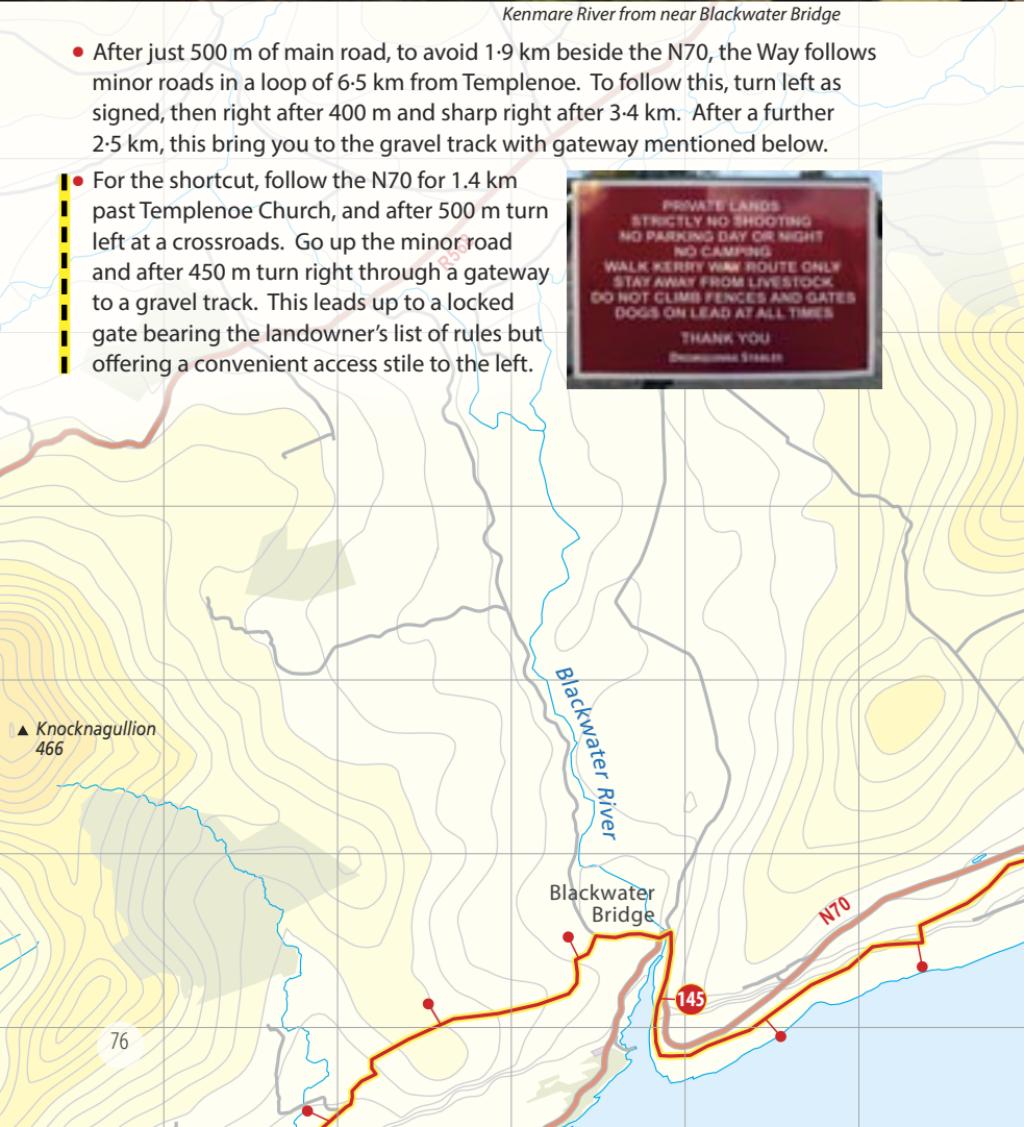
- The path takes you to a wide gravel drive which you follow left for about 400 m to another obscurely marked turn, this time to the right.
- After 200 m, turn left. Beyond the ornate entrance to a modern castle, turn left at a junction and continue to the N70 at km 150·3 where you turn right.





Kenmare River from near Blackwater Bridge

- After just 500 m of main road, to avoid 1.9 km beside the N70, the Way follows minor roads in a loop of 6.5 km from Templenoe. To follow this, turn left as signed, then right after 400 m and sharp right after 3.4 km. After a further 2.5 km, this bring you to the gravel track with gateway mentioned below.
- For the shortcut, follow the N70 for 1.4 km past Templenoe Church, and after 500 m turn left at a crossroads. Go up the minor road and after 450 m turn right through a gateway to a gravel track. This leads up to a locked gate bearing the landowner's list of rules but offering a convenient access stile to the left.



- Bear left along the field edge, gaining height. About 100 m short of a wooded area veer right, following posts which could be elusive in poor visibility. On the crest of a spur on Lacka Hill, magnificent views open up of the Kenmare River and the Beara peninsula.
- Cross a stile to a rough track through a plantation. Cross another stile on the right where the plantation ends to tackle a rough, boggy track. After about 200 m, bear left to follow waymarker posts down a tussocky slope.
- Climb a stile into a plantation where you may have to dodge past fallen trees. Cross a stile, then a footbridge across the Reen River to a private road.
- This leads to a minor road where there's a camping ground to the right. The Way turns left, uphill for about 100 m, then turns right over a stile.
- After about 200 m cross another stile to open moorland and go on up to another stile. A few steps to the left, then it's right for several hundred metres.
- At the second stile, cross the fence on the right, changing direction slightly. Soon you pass just below the summit of Gortamullin (205 m), a superb viewpoint over the vast Kenmare estuary and countless mountains to the north.
- Descend eastward for about 200 m, then bear right to cross a shallow dip. After a slight rise, descend the hillside following waymarker posts towards farm buildings.
- Bear right over a stile, then left over another after 200 m. Go down a narrow path to a minor road at km 163.





Descending Gortamullin toward Kenmare

- After 800 m the road reaches the N70 where you turn left along a roadside path – unless you're staying at one of the B&Bs at this junction. After 300 m, cross the road opposite the entrance to the Kenmare Bay Hotel, and after a further 60 m turn right through a gap in the wall.
- A path leads to a minor road: follow it down to a footbridge over the Finnihy River and into Bridge Street. Cross Kenmare's spacious market square, cross a road and continue to the Old Killarney Road junction which will be the start of the next day's walk – unless you are ending here with a bus back to Killarney.
- Some of Kenmare's attractions lie to the south of this junction, including its stone circle, pretty harbour and the striking Our Lady's Bridge across the Kenmare estuary (opened 1933).

Quill's shop in Kenmare town centre

