

## Discover this beautiful region at your own pace...

Embrace the natural landscapes and seascapes as you journey the 115 miles (185km) of scenic coastline winding your way along the edge of Belfast Lough, on to the Ards Peninsula and Strangford Lough.

Explore water's edge beauty spots and heritage sites, savour our award-winning local food and drink and create unforgettable memories at our top-class attractions. Be inspired by our creative makers and experience exhilarating activities and events – it's all waiting for you!

Ards and North Down is the ideal location to escape, relax and have fun.

Search [discovernorthernireland.com/good-to-go](http://discovernorthernireland.com/good-to-go) to find accredited tourism businesses committed to operating safely so that you can enjoy a visit with confidence.

This map will help you find out more about the area and make the most of your trip.



Castle Espie Wetland Centre, Comber

### Family fun

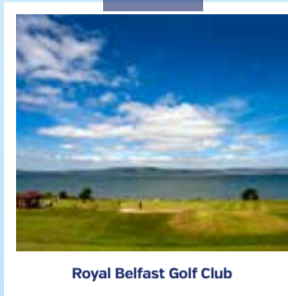
Ours is a promise of adventure, from the nooks in the woods to award-winning beaches and country parks, we're home to some of Northern Ireland's top attractions.

Step into life as it was a hundred years ago at the Ulster Folk Museum, where passionate craft makers demonstrate traditional skills. At the Ulster Transport Museum enjoy one of Europe's most comprehensive transport collections. Visit Northern Ireland's only aquarium and seal rehabilitation centre, Exploris (Portaferry). Get up close to Ireland's largest collection of native and exotic waterbirds, bats and migrant birds at Castle Espie Wetland Centre (Comber) or spend the day at Pickie Funpark (Bangor) to enjoy family favourites, the 'Pickie Puffer', giant pedal swans and mini golf.

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There are activities a plenty to keep the kids amused. From animal antics to karting, skate parks to crazy golf and water slides.



Royal Belfast Golf Club

### Adventure awaits

Get behind the wheel of a racing car or go-cart to curb your need for speed, or enjoy a bird's eye view as you take to the skies by plane, helicopter or microlight.

Explore the beauty of our lough shores by paddleboard or canoe, slow down the pace with a yoga session, self-discovery or guided walking tour.\*

Ards and North Down is also a haven for golfers with a rich heritage dating back 125 years with 12 diverse courses all within a 1 hour drive from Belfast, including parkland and links as well as being home to Ireland's oldest club, The Royal Belfast.

Whatever adventure you choose, a warm local welcome awaits!

\*Experiences and Guided Tours are available at selected times throughout the year.



North Down Museum

### Time depth

Discover the stories, embrace the folklore and indulge in our rich heritage. Explore ruined castles, holy wells, abbeys and military forts where tales of Bronze Age communities, Vikings, our early Christian and Ulster-Scots heritage and the role of this area in the Great Wars all come to life.

Local museums each have a unique story to tell. North Down Museum in Bangor, travels back to the Bronze Age through a series of rooms, each dedicated to a particular era. The Somme Museum, Conlig, transports you to the trenches for fascinating insights into life during the First and Second World Wars.

Uncover the magic of the National Trust's Mount Stewart. Tour the 19th century stately home, stroll in world-class gardens or wind along idyllic woodland and farmland walking trails in this magnificent Irish demesne.

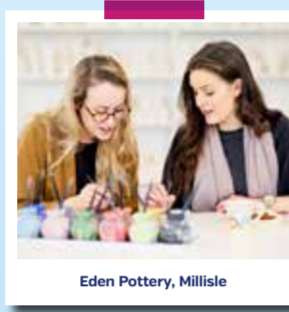


Bangor Marina

### Water's edge

This is the perfect base for water sport enthusiasts, with wonderful coastal waters and passionate providers to help as you give kite surfing, paddleboarding, canoeing or scuba diving a go.

Our scenic shoreline is yours to escape to and explore with a boat trip around the loughs, or a coastal walk or bike ride.



Eden Pottery, Millisle

### Creative spirit

A region brimming with creativity, with more makers per head than anywhere else in Northern Ireland. Awaken your creative spirit with a visit to our galleries, workshops and studios dotted across the landscape, where their unique skills are shared and crafts and artworks are showcased for sale.

Meet the makers, hear their stories, or why not take a class?



Local markets

### Food and drink

Savour the tastes of our region with the finest and freshest ingredients found at our traditional markets, artisan food shops and dishes across the region's award-winning restaurants.

See how fine gins and whiskeys are produced at Echlinville and Copeland distilleries.

### Award-Winning Beaches

#### Seaside Award

Ballywalter

BT22 2PG

Cloughey

BT22 1JA

Crawfordsburn

BT19 1JT

Groomsport

BT19 6JR

Millisle

BT22 2HS

#### Green Coast Award

Helen's Bay

BT19 1TP

#### Blue Flag Award

Bangor Marina

BT20 5ED

#### Green Flag Awards

Ballymenoch Park

Holywood BT18 0LP

Kiltonga Nature Reserve

Newtownards BT23 4TT

Londonderry Park

Newtownards BT23 8SG

Castle Park

Bangor BT20 4BN

Linear Park

Bangor BT19 6TH

## Uniqueness of this place...

Our place offers far reaching skies, miles of magnificent coastline, natural beauty, bountiful beaches and inspirational coastal and country walks.

Strangford Lough, the UK's largest sea lough, is one of only three Marine Nature Reserves in the UK. It's hard to believe that only 30 minutes from Belfast's urban attractions, this captivating rural retreat (designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and an Area of Special Scientific Interest) is waiting to be explored. Legend says there are 365 islands on Strangford Lough, one for every day of the year.

In autumn, three quarters of the world's Brent geese population migrate from Arctic Canada to make our shores their winter home. Watch their spectacular arrival and learn more about native wildlife at Castle Espie Wetland Centre.

The Ards Peninsula, Strangford Lough and their surrounding shores thrive with many creatures, marine life and visiting species through the changing seasons. You can spot seals and otters lounging on rocks, as well as Brent geese, cormorants and guillemots, creating a spectacle for bird watchers.

Ards and North Down is home to six award-winning beaches, five Green Flag Awards for parks and open spaces, as well as a world-class marina in Bangor.

Events, festivals and workshops celebrate local talent and welcome artists from near and far. Everything from our maritime heritage to local creative arts, music and food is here to embrace and enjoy.

Create your perfect escape in Ards and North Down.

## Easy to get to...

Travel to us by land, sea or air with major airports and seaports close by. Sail into our ports via Liverpool or Cairnryan, Scotland. From George Best Belfast City Airport and Belfast Docks you can reach us in under 15 minutes, and Belfast International Airport is just 21 miles (35km) away. Drive time from Dublin is under 2 hours.

With great public transport links, getting here by bus and rail is straightforward, for more information go to [translink.co.uk](http://translink.co.uk)

Located just minutes from the buzz of Belfast City Centre, but a world apart. This is the place to slow down, relax, and feed your spirit.



### While you are here – travel time by car

Belfast to Bangor – 13 miles (21km)

Belfast to Comber – 10 miles (16km)

Belfast to Donaghadee – 19 miles (30km)

Belfast to Newtownards – 10 miles (16km)

Belfast to Holywood – 5 miles (8km)

Belfast to Portaferry – 30 miles (48km)

## Where to stay...

Escape to Ards and North Down for the perfect relaxing short break. With accommodation ranging from distinctive self-catering options, cosy guest houses, glamping and caravanning/camping to three, four and five-star hotel and spa facilities, this is the perfect place to stay for a while.

## Find out more...

For more information on activities and attractions, or suggestions, contact:

### Visitor Information Centre

31 Regent Street | Newtownards

BT23 4AD

T: +44 (0)28 9182 6846

E: [ardsvic@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk](mailto:ardsvic@ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk)

[visitardsandnorthdown.com](https://www.facebook.com/visitardsandnorthdown.com)



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The information in this map was correct at the time of print. Every care has been taken to ensure accuracy; however, we cannot accept responsibility for any errors, omissions or changes that may occur.

A range of alternative formats are available to meet a specific need. To request an alternative format please phone +44 (0)28 9182 6846.

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Cover image – Scrabo Tower, Newtownards  
©Scrabo Golf Club

# Visit AND Explore Ards and North Down

FREE VISITOR MAP



## A giant adventure is just a small step away...

Ards and North Down features as part of Discover Northern Ireland's collection of Giant Experiences. Here are some ideas for ways to truly immerse yourself in this beautiful place.

### Tracey's Farmhouse Kitchen

Tracey's thatched cottage is located in a Marine Nature Reserve on Strangford Lough. Join her to make Soda and Wheaten Breads and to enjoy homemade treats around the kitchen table.

### Glide with the Tide – Mobile Team Adventure

Kayaking is a beautiful way to explore Strangford Lough. Down at water level, you are in tune with the tides, time of day and weather conditions. Enjoy being closer to the lough's wildlife, and you may even spot seal pups or wild geese.

### Sunrise SUP & Island Yoga – Strangford Lough Activity Centre

Enjoy a paddleboarding tour to a stonewashed cottage on a remote island of Strangford Lough for a revitalizing yoga session followed by a delicious local breakfast.

### Sunset Paddle & BBQ – Strangford Lough Activity Centre

Explore the unique drumlin islands on Strangford Lough on a guided canoe or kayak experience with knowledgeable instructors. Stop off at one of the unique islands and enjoy a sumptuous BBQ.

### Canoe & Cake – Tracey's Farmhouse Kitchen and Mobile Team Adventure

Enjoy the beauty of Strangford Lough from your own canoe and relax in the serenity of your surroundings before tucking into tasty treats in a traditional thatched cottage.

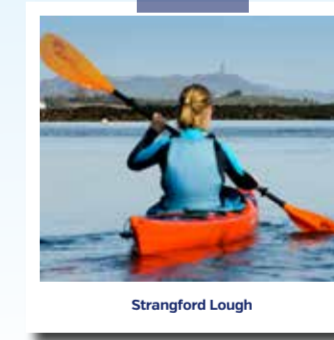
### SUPNIC – SUPHUBNI

Enjoy a paddle from beautiful Bangor Marina, then tuck into a gourmet picnic as you rest on your board taking in the water's edge views of this picturesque coastline.

More unforgettable experiences are joining the collection all the time, go to [visitardsandnorthdown.com/giant](http://visitardsandnorthdown.com/giant) to find out more.



Tracey's Farmhouse Kitchen  
©Northern Ireland Tourist Board



Strangford Lough



SUPNIC – paddleboard with a picnic

## Experience hidden gems and create lasting memories...

Be surprised and awakened with immersive experiences and guided walking tours.

Take in the natural beauty of our countryside, encounter water's edge wonders, charming towns and villages and our delicious food and drink.

Our local people are ready to welcome you and share their skills.

Be captivated on a historic guided walking tour, or try something new on our stunning coastal waters and loughs.

Find out more and pre-book your adventure today at [visitardsandnorthdown.com/experienceAND](http://visitardsandnorthdown.com/experienceAND)



[visitardsandnorthdown.com](https://www.facebook.com/visitardsandnorthdown.com)

Crawfordsburn Country Park