



Foyle Marina Pontoon

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From here you will have access to the bustling city of Derry-Londonderry. There are many tourist attractions, 400 year old intact city walls, accommodation options and great places to eat and drink. The boat up and have peace of mind that it is behind locked gates!

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It is 1.6km to the next official access point at Redcastle. Paddlers should stay outside and to the west of the shipping channel. Be aware of fishing boats (including tight manoeuvring mussels dredgers) that may not notice a canoe or kayak in the sea. Depending on wind direction, a paddler can enjoy a lee shore along this side of the lough! Some small streams spill on to the shore off the hills and there are stretches of shingle, interspersed with sand grading to silt. Watch out for oyster cages along the shore that may be hidden at high water. Some are unmarked.



Red Bridge

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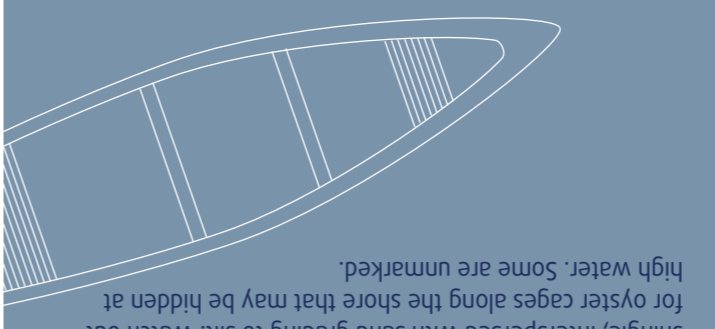
Nearby is Prehen wood, a remnant of the ancient woodland that once flanked the Foyle valley. Learn about the natural life of river and sea at the Loughs Agency's Riverwatch Visitor Centre and Aquarium (just a 5 minute walk southwards along the cycle path (opening times: T. +44 (0)28 7134 2100 or loughs-agency.org). There is also a slipway at the back of the Loughs Agency premises.

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The marina is made up of a visitor pontoon, cruise ship quay and a larger pontoon designed as a maritime event platform which has hosted the Clipper Round the World Yacht race. It is operated by Foyle Port. The marina is busy, attracting many sail cruisers from other parts of Ireland and from Scotland. The pontoons are secured by gated gangway with infocam connecting to the harbour office. Access is only by prior arrangement. For further information, please contact: Harbour Radio T: +44 (0)28 7186 0313 or email harbourradio@londondererryport.com

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From here, canoeists can paddle across the lough to Magilligan Point. The preferred route is to go north via pleasant landscapes of woods with rocky offshore reefs to Greenacastle (a busy fishing port and ferry terminal). Slightly north of here is a jumping-off point for the run across the Narrows to Magilligan Point. Paddlers should be aware that this can be a ferry glide rather than a straight paddle, dependent upon the state of the tide. This is the start of the North Coast Sea Kayak Trail, which runs approximately 90km to Waterfoot.

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Safety

Canoeing is an adventure sport and, as such, should be treated with respect. If you are new to the sport, it is advisable to contact a Canoe Association of Northern Ireland (CANI) approved provider or club where expert coaching can be provided. Details can be found at cani.org.uk

- When canoeing on the Foyle Canoe Trail consider the following safety advice:
- There are extensive mud flats in Lough Foyle and sand banks on the river – please be aware that some access points are best used at high water only.
- The river is a large spate river which comes from a wide catchment – watch out for rapid rises in water level and flood debris such as trees.
- The Foyle Port shipping channel (maintained depth 8 metres) is a short distance offshore on the Donegal side. It is marked by port and starboard pile beacons flashing red and green. Depth reduces rapidly either side of this often busy channel. Small vessels (including canoes/kayaks) should be aware of the limitations and needs of larger craft that are restricted to this channel.
- The lough and lower reaches of the river are sailing and boating recreational areas and you should be aware of other users, especially sailing boats competing in races.
- Wear an approved buoyancy aid at all times. Canoes and kayaks should have sufficient buoyancy to remain afloat if you capsize.
- Wear adequate clothing. Prolonged immersion in cold water leads to hypothermia – hypothermia can kill.
- It is not recommended to canoe alone. A group of three paddlers is the minimum recommended number to be safe.
- You do not need to be a strong swimmer but you will need the water confidence to deal with a capsized boat and get ashore safely.
- Consider attending a Foundation Safety and Rescue training course which covers safety and awareness of all types of canoe and kayak and environmental issues.
- Carry and know how to use a map and compass.
- It is recommended that paddlers obtain an up-to-date weather forecast as the Foyle can become rough in strong winds. Carrying rafting poles for open canoes is also a sensible precaution (rafted canoes are more stable in rough conditions).
- CANI recommends that paddlers leave details of their journey with the coastguard and another responsible adult. Belfast Coastguard T. +44 (0) 28 9146 3933 Malin Head Coastguard T. +353 (0)74 9370103
- Carry adequate basic safety equipment – spare clothes, extra food, warm drink, bivvi bag, compass and means of communication (waterproofed VHF radio or mobile phone, flares etc), first aid kit. Remember – a canoe may be difficult to see from a larger craft so carry a whistle.



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Access Point 6 - Redcastle Hotel

The nice pebble beach below the Redcastle Hotel is a good place to pull ashore – whether for a rest or to avail of some information on tides, tidal streams and navigation points) Directions: ISBN 978 0 9558 199 1 9 (excellent OSNI Discoverer Series: sheet 4, 7, 12 Ordnance Survey Ireland: sheet 3 Admiralty Chart no 2510 East Inishowen Sea Kayak Trail Guide (contains charts of the lough)

It is 6.7km to the next official access point at Moville. The padding along this section of the lough is past low cliffs with wooded coves and small beaches. The hills to the south and east are the Sperrin Mountains. These form part of the watershed of the Foyle. The hill with a distinctive stepped profile is Binevenagh, formed from lava eruptions millions of years ago.

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Access Point 7 - Moville

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Access Point 2 - Gribben Quay

The nice pebble beach below the Redcastle Hotel is a good place to pull ashore – whether for a rest or to avail of some information on tides, tidal streams and navigation points) Directions: ISBN 978 0 9558 199 1 9 (excellent OSNI Discoverer Series: sheet 4, 7, 12 Ordnance Survey Ireland: sheet 3 Admiralty Chart no 2510 East Inishowen Sea Kayak Trail Guide (contains charts of the lough)

It is 6.7km to the next official access point at Moville. The padding along this section of the lough is past low cliffs with wooded coves and small beaches. The hills to the south and east are the Sperrin Mountains. These form part of the watershed of the Foyle. The hill with a distinctive stepped profile is Binevenagh, formed from lava eruptions millions of years ago.

There is a boatyard at the castle

