

# Divis and Black Mountain



Photograph courtesy of Chris Hill/National Trust

## Route description\*

This route explores a beautiful wilderness above Belfast with fine views over the city, following both surfaced and unsurfaced paths with some steep hills.

## Distance

Black Mountain 3.6 miles 6 km return.  
Divis Mountain a further 1.4 miles 2.3 km.

## Average Time

1 hr 45 mins 2 hrs.

## Access

**By bus** - Ulsterbus No 106 Belfast to Crumlin via Hannahstown; get off at Upper Springfield Road and walk 0.6 miles (0.9km) along Divis Road.

**By car** - Take M1 to junction 2 Stockmans Lane for A55 Outer Ring (Falls). Continue over 2 roundabouts and from dual carriageway turn left to Upper Springfield Road. Continue for 2.5 miles turning left into Divis Road. After a short distance the car park is on your left opposite the entrance to the mountain.

## Trail Route

From the car park take care when crossing the Divis Road, follow the main access road towards Divis and Black mountains **(1)**. After a short distance you will pass the former Divis Lodge **(2)**.

When you reach the point where the road turns left; you can follow two different trails each climbing to a different summit.

The path off to the right around the TV mast **(3)** leads to the summit of Black Mountain (1275ft) **(4)**. On the way across the bog and heath you will pass the Bobby Stone, a large erratic deposited after the last ice age. If the weather is clear you will be rewarded with superb views over Belfast and beyond. Retrace your steps to the path junction.

From here take up the surfaced road again which winds its way up for just over one kilometre to the summit of Divis (1562ft) **(4)**. At the top there is a Ministry of Defence communications compound.

## \*Advice

Suitable warm outdoor clothing should be worn when visiting Divis and the Black Mountain.

## Trail 11



### Things of Interest

#### Divis and Black Mountain (1)

Rising to 478 and 390 metres respectively, are situated in the heart of the Belfast Hills, which stretch for 11 miles from Lisburn to Newtownabbey and provide a spectacular backdrop to the city.

#### Divis Lodge (2)

This house and farm was the home of the Dobbin family who lived here until the 1950s.

#### TV transmitter (3)

This transmitter broadcasts TV signals across Belfast and NI. This is the oldest television transmission site in the whole of Ireland, having come on stream in July 1955.

#### Views (4)

The views from both summits stretch beyond the city. The Castlereagh hills, Mourne Mountains, Strangford Lough and the Sperrins are all visible. On a clear day you may see as far as the coast of Scotland, England and the Isle of Man.

### History

There is lots of evidence of early settlements on Divis. There are at least four Bronze Age burial cairns, along with the site of an earlier megalithic tomb. Prehistoric hut sites survive along with two curious stone walled enclosures, one of which may be early Christian period in date. In 1828 the peak was used as a site for the Drummond limelight, a very bright light which was used to start the Ordnance Survey mapping of Ireland.

The site was officially closed to the public for 50 years when it was owned by the Ministry of Defence. The communication centre on the top of Divis was originally used in the Cold War and later during the troubles. The site was also used as a training area for the army.

### Look out for

- skylarks, stonechats, snipe and peregrine falcons.
- archaeological remains on the site.
- former Ministry Of Defence buildings.

For more information see the National Trust Divis and Black Mountain leaflet.