

Minnowburn and Giant's Ring

Points of interest

Gilchrist Bridge is named after John Gilchrist, founder and first chairperson of Lagan Valley Regional Park.

Giant's Ring was built in about 2700 BC during the Neolithic period. It is one of the finest examples of a henge monument still in existence. In the middle, is a tomb made up of five upright stones with a large capstone. Its bare frame was a passage tomb covered with a cairn of stones and earth.

Sandpit Field contains a natural amphitheatre carved out during the last Ice Age. In 1969, a free concert was held here called 'Pop for Peace'.

Terrace Hill Rose Garden was constructed in the mid-1930s by a local linen merchant, Ned Robinson. The garden has one of the finest viewpoints in the Lagan Valley.

4 miles, 6.5 km, circular

Starting at the carpark at Shaw's Bridge, cross over the old bridge. Take the ramps downhill. At the bottom of the ramps, pass under the old bridge into Minnowburn which is owned by the National Trust. Follow the gravel path alongside the River Lagan until you reach the Minnow Burn. Cross the bridge over the burn and turn left. Keep the burn on your left. Continue on this gravel path. Go straight ahead, passing the mole sculpture and a National Trust waymarker. At the waymarker, follow the sign for Terrace Hill and Giant's Ring. Take the steep gravel path to the top. Enjoy Terrace Hill Garden with fantastic views over Lagan Valley, Malone House and to the Belfast Hills.

At Terrace Hill Garden, take the path to the left, signposted Giant's Ring. Follow this old laneway to the end and take the pedestrian exit. Cross the road and go over the stile into the Sandpit Field. Walk along the fenced path at the edge of the field. Cross over the stile to exit the field. Once back out onto the road, cross over and turn right. Straight ahead is a

signpost to Giant's Ring. Follow the road to the Giant's Ring.

Continue through the kissing gate to access the monument. Take time to explore the area. From here retrace your steps. Go back along the laneway to the stiles into the field, and back to Terrace Hill Garden. At the garden, walk straight through. Take the steps down to your left past a welcome sign. Take the steps all the way down to the road. At the bottom, turn right along the road and this will bring you back to Minnowburn carpark and the bridge over the burn.

At the bridge, take the path before you cross the bridge to the left. Continue along this path as it swings left alongside the River Lagan. Continue walking along this path keeping the river on your right. The path will take you to Gilchrist Bridge. Cross the bridge and follow the towpath alongside the river. Keeping the river on your right, follow the towpath back to Shaw's Bridge carpark.

