

Roundwood, at 239 metres above sea level, is one of the highest villages in Ireland and is located on the main route from Dublin to Glendalough. The Gaelic name ‘An Tochar’ meaning ‘causeway’ refers to stones and trees laid across wet and boggy ground to provide crossing-points for travellers in the past. The scenic Vartry Reservoirs adjoin the village while a few miles away are spectacular Loughs Dan and Tay nestling in the Wicklow Mountains.

Today, Roundwood is a haven for walkers, cyclists, anglers and golfers. This pleasant and traditional village is the ideal base from which to explore the breath-taking natural beauty of the Wicklow Mountains, including walking the famous Wicklow Way. Enjoy the traditional Irish welcome in our atmospheric pubs with quality food and good pints!

Fact file

Longitude and latitude: 53°6.20'N and 6°14.28'W
Height above sea level: 239m
Geology: Slate, sandstone, schist and quartzite Cambrian-Ordovician
Soil type: Peaty podzol (Spodosol)
Population: c. 800
Twinned with: Spezet, Brittany.



www.visitwicklow.ie



An Chomhairle Oidhreachta
The Heritage Council

www.roundwood.ie

Former Famous Residents of Roundwood

Roundwood and its hinterland have attracted and continue to attract many famous people to visit or live in the area.

The Synges Family lived in Roundwood and their estate extended to Glanmore Castle. **John Hatch Synges** (1788-1845), an admirer of the educationalist Pestalozzi, founded a school on the estate based on Pestalozzi's method. He set up a printing press in Roundwood in 1817 to print his English translations of Pestalozzi's work. His grandson, **John Millington Synges** (1871-1909), author of the 'Playboy of the Western World', spent much time in the area.

General Joseph Holt (1756-1826) of the United Irishmen conducted a campaign in the area against the British during the 1798 Rebellion. He was transported to Australia. The family returned to Ireland and Holt is buried in Monkstown, Co. Dublin. A memorial stone is to be found near his family farm on the Enniskerry road.

Seán T. O'Kelly (1882-1966), second President of Ireland (1945-1959), lived in Roundwood Park, just outside the village. He was a member of Dáil Éireann from 1918 and was Minister in several key departments from 1932 until his election as President.

The Barton-Childers connection

The Barton family acquired the nearby Glendalough House estate in 1838. One branch of the family has been involved in the Bordeaux wine trade since 1725. Wine buffs would be familiar with the names Barton & Guestier, Chateaux Langon-Barton and Leoville-Barton.

Robert Barton (1881-1975) was elected as a Sinn Féin member in the 1918 general election to the British House of Commons. He was a signatory of the Anglo-Irish Treaty on 6th December 1921. He died at home in Glendalough House aged 94.

Robert Erskine Childers (1870-1922) lived with his relatives, the Barton family, at Glendalough House as a child. He was a leading Irish Republican executed during the Irish Civil War. He wrote the espionage thriller *The Riddle of the Sands*.

Erskine Hamilton Childers (1905-1974) served as the fourth President of Ireland from 1973 until his death in 1974. He was a member of the Dáil (1938-1973) and Minister for many years. He is buried at Derryloughy Church.

Ballyremon Commons

Ballyremon Commons is an area of ancient and natural beauty between Djouce Woods and Great Sugar Loaf and is of archaeological importance with fulacht fiadh, ring forts, bowl barrow, hut sites, earthworks and cairns dating back at least 4,000 years. 'Lazy beds' or ridges used for growing potatoes up to famine times are visible here.



Calary Church

This Gothic-style Church of Ireland church was built in 1834 and is located within an idyllic setting surrounded by a small graveyard. Rev John Nelson Darby (1800-1882) was curate here from 1826 to 1828 and then joined the Plymouth Brethren. Later he formed congregations on the Continent in many countries and his followers became known as Darbyites or Exclusive Brethren.



Pubs of Roundwood

The relaxing atmosphere of our four village pubs has to be savoured. Each has a different character to meet every taste from quality food to Irish dancing.



The Garda Station was built in 1957 initially to provide accommodation for the members of the force required to guard President Sean T. O'Kelly.

Garda Station

The Parish Hall was built in 1910 and redeveloped in 2008. It is used for many village events.

Parish Hall

St. Laurence O'Toole Church is a fine example of 19th century Gothic architecture. The architect, J J McCarthy, was considered the Irish 'Pugin'. The foundation stone was laid in 1867 and the church consecrated in 1871.

St. Laurence O'Toole Church



Vartry Reservoirs

These purpose-built reservoirs were designed to supply the City of Dublin with drinking water. The Lower Vartry Reservoir was formed by constructing a dam across the valley of the River Vartry between 1862 and 1868. To provide additional storage, a second dam, 3.5km upstream, was completed in 1923, forming the Upper Reservoir. Both dams are earthen embankments with waterproof clay cores and have a stone facing on the upstream slope to prevent wave erosion. Water is abstracted from the Lower Reservoir through the Draw Off Tower and conveyed by pipe under the dam to the Water Treatment Plant. The plant treats 80 million litres of water daily and supplies large areas of Dublin, North Wicklow and Dun Laoghaire Rathdown with drinkable water. Interpretation panels at the dam on the Lower Vartry Reservoir explain the water treatment process.

Outdoor activities

The Wicklow Way
This long distance walking route runs across the Dublin and Wicklow Mountains from Rathfarnham in Co. Dublin to Clonegal in Co. Carlow. The Roundwood section includes spectacular views.

Lough Dan, Vartry Reservoirs and Ballinastoe Wood
A Walks Information Board at the Old School shows family walks for different abilities. Djouce Wood, 8km towards Enniskerry, has similar walks.

Ballinastoe Mountain Biking Trails
There is a 14km public network of purpose built singlettrack trails and forest roads on a waymarked circular route, with long climbs and descents over a wide variety of difficult terrain.
www.wicklowway.com / www.roundwood.ie / www.coillteoutdoors.ie

Emergency services
999 or 112

Dublin Wicklow Mountain Rescue Team headquarters is in the Garda Station. The **First Responders**, with defibrillators and oxygen, were pioneered by Roundwood in the county. Both voluntary groups deliver a professional emergency service to those lost, injured or taken ill in the area or in the Dublin/Wicklow Mountains.



Wicklow Cheviot Sheep

The Wicklow Mountains have been renowned from as early as the mid-15th century for their sheep. The mountainous environment, combined with skilful breeding, have evolved the extremely hardy breed known as the Wicklow Cheviot, distinct in appearance and character from any other breed in Ireland. The sheep are renowned not just for the quality of the meat but also for their fine wool (www.wicklowsheep.ie).



Derryloughy Church & graveyard

Derryloughy Church, built c.1820, was formerly Church of Ireland but was deconsecrated in 1985. The graveyard is a very ancient Christian site and is still in use. President Erskine Childers is buried here.

Mammals including Badger, Otter, Red Squirrel, Mink, Fox, Stoat, Hedgehog and Deer are a common sight. **The Vartry Reservoirs** are known for wintering Waterfowl. Good numbers of Duck can be seen in the winter, with the most common being Mallard, Wigeon and Teal.

Other ducks such as Pochard, Tufted Duck and Goldeneye occur in smaller numbers. Waders, like Lapwing and Curlew, are commonly seen around the shores of the lake and on adjoining agricultural land. Mute and Whooper Swans also frequent the reservoirs during the winter. Other common species include Little Grebes, Cormorants and Grey Herons. If you are lucky, you may spot Kingfisher. During summer, keep an eye out for Great-Crested Grebes, which breed on the lakes.



Many birds breed and nest in the **uplands**: Red Grouse, Peregrine, Merlin, Skylark, Meadow Pipit, Common Snipe and Whinchat. Common visitors are Hen Harrier, Golden Plover, Wheatear and Stonechat. Grey Wagtail and Dipper are commonly seen at upland streams.

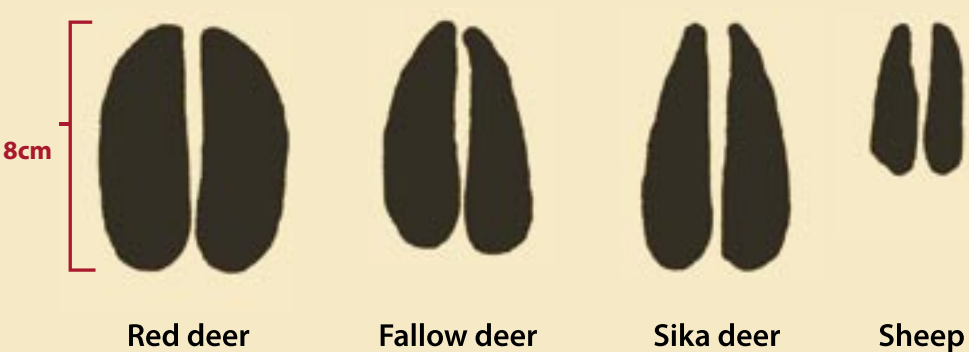


Great-Crested Grebe

Wildlife in the area

Deer are a common sight in the Wicklow Uplands. The species most commonly seen are Sika hybrid which is a cross between the native Irish Red Deer and the Japanese Sika Deer. Sika Deer are originally from Japan. They were introduced to Ireland by Lord Powerscourt in 1859, at his estate near Glencree, Co. Wicklow. Unfortunately, they escaped from captivity, and in Wicklow, interbred with the native Red Deer. The result is that now all the Deer in Wicklow are hybrids, a mixture of Red and Sika Deer.

Comparison of tracks



In autumn, rutting Red stag roar, the Sika stag whistles, while the Sika hybrids can make a curious mixture of both sounds – sometimes starting with a whistle and ending in an attempted roar.



Sika deer hybrids