



PRESS RELEASE



CLIFF-FACE WALKWAYS AND BRIDGES: NOW YOU CAN EXPERIENCE THE GOBBINS IN NORTHERN IRELAND

Open to the public for the
first time in six decades

Potential to attract 70,000
visitors annually to East
Antrim

New visitor centre has been
built as part of the £7.5m
project

The Gobbins Coastal Path in Islandmagee, County Antrim, has officially reopened following a £7.5million restoration. The attraction was first enjoyed by the Edwardians, following its original development in 1902 by visionary railway engineer, Berkeley Deane Wise.

The dramatic two-mile long path, part of Northern Ireland's famous Causeway Coastal Route, consists of a network of walkways, bridges and water-splashed gantries embedded into the black basalt sheer cliff faces.

During its Edwardian heyday, The Gobbins attracted more tourists than The Giant's Causeway but five decades after launching it fell into disrepair and closed to the public in 1954.

Following significant investment, the magnificently restored attraction is set to become a thriving tourism hub once again. The Gobbins – which takes its name from the Irish '*An Gobain*', meaning 'the points of rock' – features a series of both tubular and suspension bridges, replicating the design marvel created by Wise over 100 years ago.

The pathway offers an exhilarating walk to awaken the senses, a mix of rugged beauty, spectacular views, heritage, flora and fauna. Nature lovers can get up close and personal with coastal birds such as guillemots and kittiwakes, as well as Northern Ireland's only mainland colony of puffins.

Vanessa Markey, Tourism Ireland's Head of Great Britain said: "The Gobbins is a unique coastal experience that will no doubt reclaim its title as one of Northern Ireland's premier visitor attractions. Re-building the paths has been a complex



For further information and images please contact Paul Charles / Sarah Potter / Sarah Rigler / Frankie Matthews at Perowne Charles Communications

+44 (0) 20 7792 8884
tourismireland@verypcc.com

[See more at
our newsstand](#)

engineering feat that simply must be experienced by anyone visiting Northern Ireland.

“Northern Ireland saw a 6% increase in visitor numbers in 2014 compared to the previous year, welcoming 1.8 million overseas visitors. The re-opening of The Gobbins marks a huge milestone for tourism in Northern Ireland and we look forward to welcoming even more visitors to this unique attraction.”

With access by guided tour, The Gobbins journey begins at a state-of-the-art visitor centre, which includes a café and interactive exhibition. Following a safety briefing, walkers are transferred to the cliff path by minibus. Tours begin on the hour, currently from 10am to 3pm daily. The full excursion including the visitor centre can take up to 3-4 hours.

Just a 40 minute drive from Belfast, The Gobbins coastal path lies at the beginning of the world-famous Causeway Coastal Route and is situated close to the famous Blackhead lighthouse. This geologically diverse Northern Ireland landscape also provides the location backdrop for the hit TV series, Game of Thrones.

Other popular destinations within the region include The Giant's Causeway, the Glens of Antrim, Bushmills Distillery, Rathlin Island as well as miles of golden sand.

The Gobbins is open daily from 9.30am to 5.30pm with prices starting from £8.50 for adults and £6.00 for concessions. Pre-booking is recommended.

Notes to editors

The original path at The Gobbins was opened in 1902, and immediately captivated visitors. The path was part of the vision of Berkeley Deane Wise, Chief Engineer of the Belfast and Northern Counties Railway Company, to use the recently expanded railway line to attract visitors to this spectacular part of Ireland.

With the arrival of the steam train in the 19th Century it became possible to move large amounts of people and goods in relatively short times. Not only did the railways turn cities like Belfast into industrial powerhouses, they opened up remote beauty spots to a new kind of industry – tourism.

Believing the scenery in this area rivalled anywhere else in the world, Berkeley Deane Wise, along with his pioneering colleague Edward Cotton, virtually invented modern tourism in the region.

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT:

For more information on Ireland, please visit www.ireland.com

For more information on The Gobbins, please
visit www.thegobbinscliffpath.com

For media information, please visit www.media.ireland.com