

# Care for the Environment

## Please respect the environment on Skellig Michael.

- Skellig Michael is a National Monument and World Heritage Site and is protected by the National Monuments Acts 1930 – 2004.
- The walls and buildings are very fragile and easily damaged. Please do not climb on them.
- Because of excessive wear and damage within the monastery, access within the enclosure may be restricted and only allowed under the supervision of a guide.
- Graffiti or any other wilful damage will result in the prosecution of the offender.
- In order to protect wildlife and maintain the fragile ecosystem, dogs or other animals are prohibited from the island.
- Enjoy wildlife from a safe distance – close contact or feeding can disturb natural behaviour. Bird colonies should not be disturbed during nesting.
- Picnicking is not permitted within the monastic enclosure or on the steps. Please do so at the Wailing Woman or at Christ's Saddle just before the last flight of steps to the monastery.
- All litter should be taken back to the boat and disposed of later at an appropriate facility on the mainland.

	<b>WARNING</b> Beware of falling rocks
	<b>WARNING</b> Sheer Drop with no edge protection
	<b>WARNING</b> Steps slippery when wet
	<b>WARNING</b> Steep gradient on the steps
	<b>WARNING</b> Uneven steps
	<b>Children must be strictly supervised at all times</b>
	<b>Stay on the path at all times</b>
	<b>Skellig Michael is a wilderness site and designated nature reserve</b>
	<b>Please take note that accidents and fatalities have occurred from the access steps</b>
	<b>The opening season for the island is restricted to the advertised period</b>
	<b>At all other times the site is unmanned and visits are prohibited</b>
	<b>NO DOGS</b>

# SKELLIG MICHAEL CO KERRY

## SAFE ACCESS GUIDE



Comhshaal, Oidhreacht agus Rialtas Áitiúil  
Environment, Heritage and Local Government



## Introduction

Skellig Michael is a World Heritage Site and is unique. It has special archaeological, historical and spiritual significance in addition to being a delicate wilderness habitat. Please help us to preserve this special place at all times.

The key things to remember are:

- This is a wilderness site. Accidents and fatalities have occurred.
- Take responsibility for your own actions.
- Show courtesy to your fellow visitors.
- Care for the environment.

Further information can be obtained by checking our websites:

[www.heritageireland.ie](http://www.heritageireland.ie)

[www.worldheritageireland.ie](http://www.worldheritageireland.ie)

## Planning Your Visit

The seas can be quite rough and the weather unpredictable. Ensure that you have appropriate wind waterproof clothing and wear suitable footwear for the climb. Visitors should be aware that the trip in its entirety could last up to 6 hours and there are no toilets on the island. Visitors are strongly advised to bring food and drink with them and to carry items in a backpack, ensuring your hands are left free. There are almost 600 steps to reach the monastery.

Visitors are requested to give serious consideration before deciding to bring young children to the island. Otherwise, if young children are brought, they should be under strict supervision at all times. No dogs or other animals are allowed.

## The Terrain & Your Safety

- Transferring between a boat and the landing pier can be hazardous in certain sea conditions; there is a risk of serious injury or death.
- The lighthouse road and access routes are exposed to loose overhead rock.
- The access route includes steep uneven steps with unprotected edges.
- Steps can be slippery when wet.
- The terrain includes sheer cliffs, please stay on the designated access route.
- Straying from the access route involves a high risk of fall or tumble.
- Due to the unpredictable nature of the winds, be prepared for sudden gusts or change in direction particularly when on the steps.
- Know your own abilities and seek the advice of the guides.

## The Guide Service

- The guides' function is primarily to protect the monument and to interpret the site's significance.
- The guides do not escort visitors up and down the access routes.
- The guides are the official monitors on the island and their instructions, particularly in relation to safety, must be complied with at all times.
- You will be met by a guide on the lighthouse road at the start of the climb to the monastery.

## Visitor Behaviour

- Leaving the access route may cause the dislodging of loose rock and stones, thereby endangering the lives of those below.
- Picking up and throwing loose stones damages the monument and endangers the lives of those below.
- Climbing on dry stone walls is forbidden. This damages the monument and may endanger lives.
- Offenders risk prosecution.
- Take your time. Do not hurry when either ascending or descending the steps.
- If the route is congested, please give way to the person who is descending.

