

# Minwear/Canaston Woods

Half Day + Walk



**SCALE:** 0 300 600 m

**DISTANCE/DURATION:** 5.1 miles (8.2 km) 2 hours 30 minutes

**PUBLIC TRANSPORT:** Service bus at Canaston Bridge via 1 km woodland walk 322/381/385

**CHARACTER:** Woodland, reasonably level

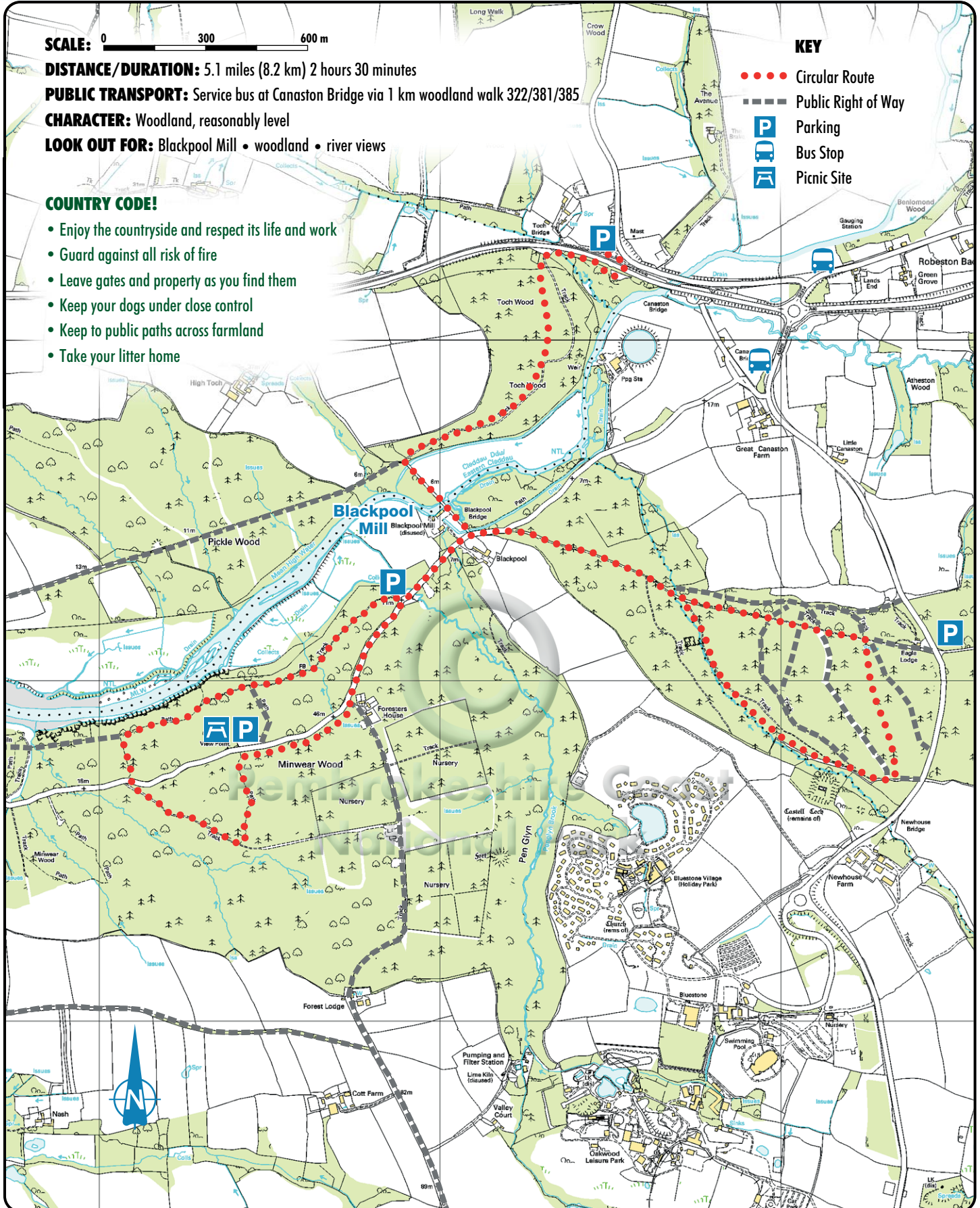
**LOOK OUT FOR:** Blackpool Mill • woodland • river views

### COUNTRY CODE!

- Enjoy the countryside and respect its life and work
- Guard against all risk of fire
- Leave gates and property as you find them
- Keep your dogs under close control
- Keep to public paths across farmland
- Take your litter home

### KEY

- Circular Route
- Public Right of Way
- P Parking
- Bus Stop
- Picnic Site



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**Grid ref:** SN060143

The valley of the Eastern Cleddau has been wooded for many centuries. The woodland south of today's Canaston Bridge was once inside the boundary of the medieval Narberth Forest.

Minwear and Canaston Woods are ancient woodlands, though in the last century fast-growing conifers have replaced some of the oaks. Through most of that time they have been working woods; wood was cut and made into charcoal and pit props, while oak bark would have been gathered – until Victorian times it was used to tan leather.

There was even a blast furnace producing iron in Canaston Wood. Built in the 1630s by English ironmaster George Mynne, it used

locally-mined iron and charcoal from the surrounding forest. Later an iron forge was established at Blackpool, now Blackpool Mill.

The mill was built in 1813 on the site of the forge. It operated until World War Two but then fell into disuse.

At the mill the Cleddau reaches its tidal limit, finally leaving the influence of salt seawater. There are waterside birds like herons and kingfishers to see. Tree-loving species are plentiful too, including long-tailed tits, great spotted woodpeckers and treecreepers.

The area has many links with the Middle Ages. Close to the route are the ruins known as Sisters House which date from the medieval period and may have been a hostel for women pilgrims.

Next to Minwear Farm is the 12th century St Womar's Church which was once in the control of the crusader Knights of St John.

