

# Roch/Brandy Brook

## Short Walk



**SCALE:** 0 300 600 m

**DISTANCE/DURATION:** 3.4 miles (5.4 km) 1 hour 30 minutes

**PUBLIC TRANSPORT:** Service bus Roch 411

**CHARACTER:** Wooded valley, stiles, ladder stile, fields and livestock, gradients  
Not suitable for dogs

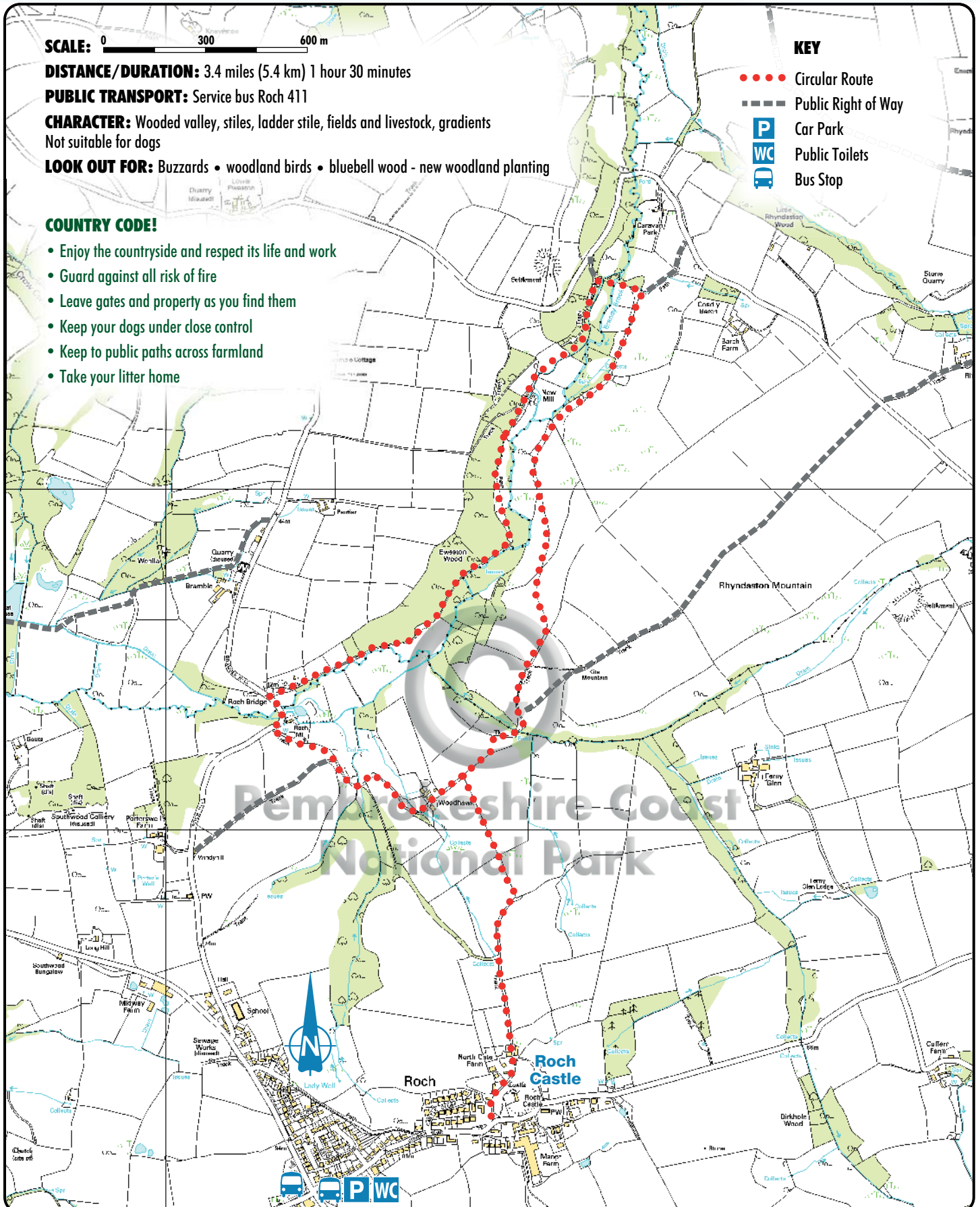
**LOOK OUT FOR:** Buzzards • woodland birds • bluebell wood - new woodland planting

### 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 Car Park
- WC Public Toilets
- Bus Stop



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**Public transport:** Service bus Roch 411.

**Grid ref:** SM878221

The rolling countryside behind Newgale Sands is 'mountain country'. Each little summit has the word 'mountain' tagged onto its name, though none top 500 feet (150m).

This route follows the valley of the fast-flowing Brandy Brook, which skirts the flank of Rhyndaston Mountain - a hill that only reaches 410 feet (125m).

Roch Castle is a landmark in this open landscape. Built on an outcrop of rock the single tower dates from the 13th century.

Brandy Brook is usually considered to be a marker on the Landsker, the notional boundary between Norman-controlled south Pembrokeshire and the part that remained in Welsh control.

Roch Castle stood on this cultural boundary. There were other border castles at Haycastle, close to this route, and at a little further east at Wolf's Castle.

According to a local legend a Norman lord called Adam De La Roche built his castle after being told by a wise woman he was to suffer a fatal snake bite.

He would, she told him, be bitten by a serpent during the following year. To escape his fate he built the tower and spent a year in its upper rooms.

On the last day of his year a bundle of firewood was brought into the room. It was a snake hiding inside the bundle that killed the nobleman.

The area has plenty of wildlife - though nothing as threatening as De La Roche's serpent. In spring the woodland along the Brandy Brook is full of bluebells and there are lots of birds to see. One to look out for is the buzzard, which you will often see riding thermals on broad, motionless wings.

