

Slebech Park

Short Walk



SCALE: 0 200 400 m

DISTANCE/DURATION: 2.1 miles (3.4km) 1 hour

Follow the white arrows

CHARACTER: Signposted route, reasonably level in woodland, pasture, park land and partly along estate drive

CAUTION: Walk may be temporarily closed for short periods due to estate management and shooting. For further information please contact 01437 752000

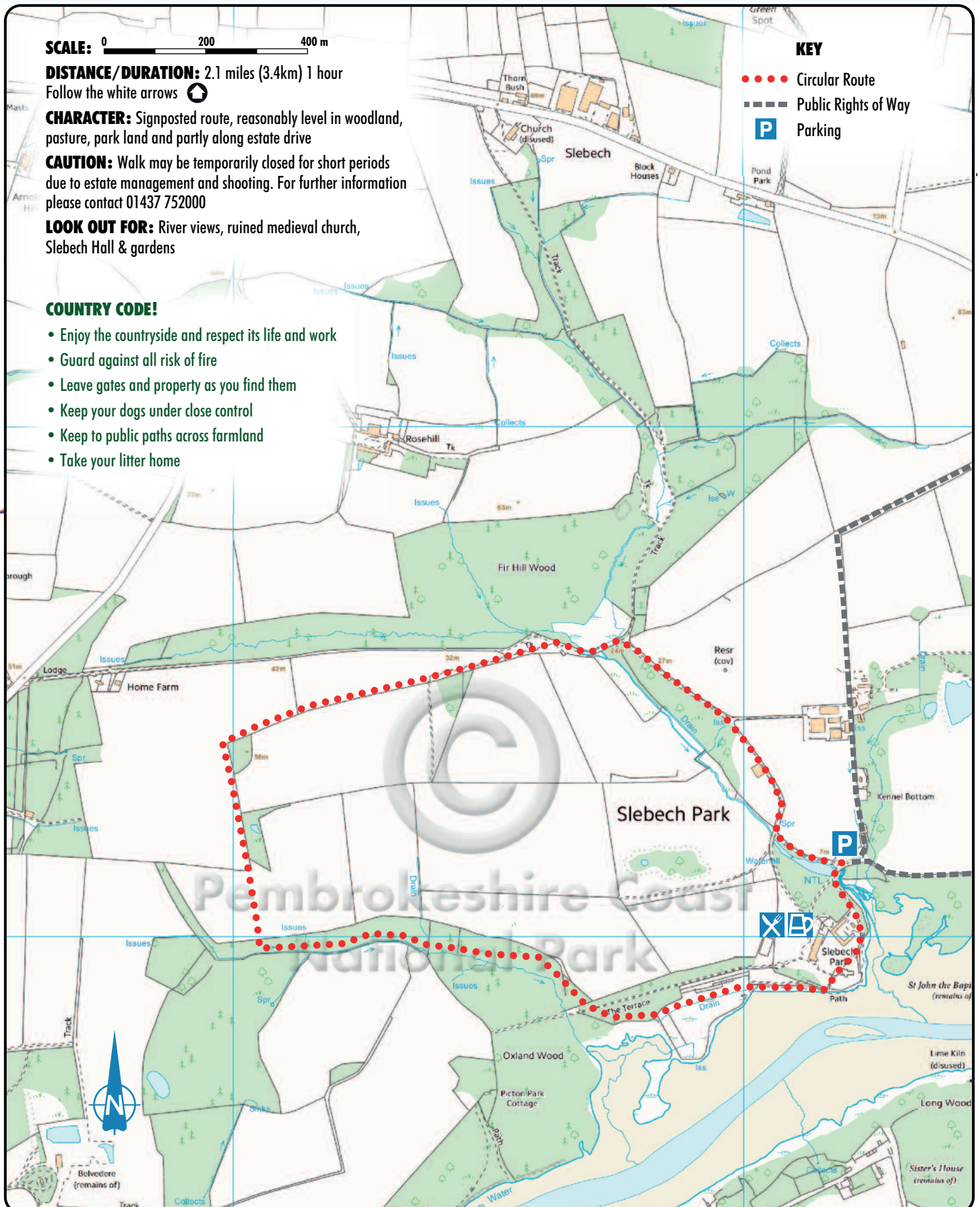
LOOK OUT FOR: River views, ruined medieval church, Slebech Hall & gardens

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 Rights of Way
- Parking



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Length: 2.1 miles (3.4 km)

Grid ref: SN030141

This walk has been created in co-operation with the landowner of Slebech Park who has given permission for the public to walk a circuit route. Path improvements were undertaken by National Park volunteers in 2015.

The Slebech Park Estate is set in 650 acres of arable fields, pasture and woodland in the heart of the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park on the upper tidal reaches of the Eastern Cleddau River.

During the 13th and 14th centuries it was a base for the Knights Hospitallers of the Order of St John, a monastic order of knights who fought in the crusades.

The Knights of St John founded a commandery at Slebech as a headquarters to administer their extensive lands and possessions in West Wales. They also founded a hospice as a staging post for pilgrims travelling to St Davids.

During the dissolution of the monasteries presided over by Henry VIII, the religious order's lands were seized by the Crown and the commandery ceased to function.

The ruin of the former parish church with its Norman tower, dating from the 12th century and the thick foundation walls of Slebech Hall are all that now remain of this once substantial medieval settlement.

The lands passed to the Barlows, a powerful Tudor gentry family, who continued to own Slebech until the 18th century.

The building of Slebech Hall began in the 1750s. In its time it was one of Wales' finest Georgian manor houses with a castellated, imposing structure with many original internal features

surviving. A grandiose range of stables and coach houses were also built around a central courtyard. These Grade II listed outbuildings now form part of the visitor accommodation and restaurant.

The Hall and estate have changed hands a number of times over the years. In the old churchyard at Slebech Sir William Hamilton lies buried next to his first wife and heiress to Slebech, Catherine Barlow.

Following Catherine's death in 1782 he married his second wife, Lady Emma Hamilton, who later had a well-publicised affair with Lord Nelson.

A Polish nobleman, Baron De Rutzen, later married into the family and in 1848 was responsible for the building of a new parish church for Slebech on what is now the main A40 road. The old church on the riverside then fell into disuse.

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