



THE NATIONAL TRUST

Salt Island Bothy

Booking Notes

Salt Island bothy provides a fantastic overnight camping experience but requires the complete cooperation of all visitors to help with maintenance and upkeep. Please read the following notes carefully and ensure your whole group are aware of them.

Location

The Bothy was restored in June 2008 and is located on Salt Island on Strangford Lough just south of Killyleagh. It is a bunkhouse which provides very basic shelter, accommodation and camping facilities. It is very popular with canoeists, boat users, youth groups and families.

Salt Island is one of 11 canoe access points of the circular Strangford Lough Canoe Trail. The canoe trail was officially launched at the bothy on 2nd July 2008. For a map and guide see www.canoeni.com.

Bothy Facilities

The bothy can accommodate up to about 12 people and offers running mains water, toilets, two outdoor BBQs, a plastic shelter for storing firewood and a lean-to area for hanging wet gear etc. There are some movable wooden platforms which can be slept on, but no mattresses or bedding. There is a small table and some chairs, a wood burning stove, a kitchen area with sink but no cooker. Users must bring their own means of cooking such as a Trangia or gas stove, along with any fire wood needed. However, from time to time, The National Trust will undertake small amounts of tree thinning and pruning as part of ongoing management. Feel free to use any branches you find laying on the ground but please do not cut any branches from the trees.

Although The National Trust has donated small amounts of kitchen utensils and crockery, we do not guarantee that these will be provided. To avoid disappointment, all users are advised to bring everything they think they will need during their stay, including toilet paper, washing up liquid, cooking pots, matches, candles etc. Many past users have donated such items on departure. Any additional donations would be gratefully received, however, we would ask visitors not to leave any perishable food that will go off or attract rats.

No electricity is available at the bothy, however, you are welcome to bring your own portable generator to provide power to the existing electrical fittings and fixtures.

Access

The bothy is located on the South Eastern side of the island (GR 532501), near the jetty. The jetty is only useable up to two hours either side of high tide (depending on the size of your boat). The area immediately beside the jetty is free from boulders, which allows small boats to land and be hauled up onto the beach. The area in front of the bothy is shallow and becomes mud flats at low tide which has the potential to strand boats until the tide returns. However, the beach at the North West bay (GR528502), is accessible at all states of tide and is only a few minute's walk to the bothy. There is no jetty here, so if you arrive on a larger boat, you may still have to step into shallow water or anchor and row ashore in a tender. The canoe trail guide can be referred to for further advice on tides.

Bookings and charges

All bookings for the bothy are coordinated through Castle Ward reception on 028 4488 1204. The charges, which go towards running, administration and maintenance costs, must also be paid in full before key collection. Charges are as follows:

Bothy	£6 per person per night sharing OR £60 for exclusive use of the bothy.
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Please note that booking the use of the bothy includes the walled camping area at the front of the bothy and the fenced woodland at the back. If you have booked exclusive use of the bothy, you have the right to ask others to vacate these areas if you so wish. Having booked for an evening stay, we would expect visitors to be ready to vacate by midday, to allow the handover of use to the next visitors.

There is no charge for camping at Brandy Bay (on the north side of the island). However, this does not allow access to the bothy facilities. If you are wild camping, we would encourage visitors to comply with the "Leave No Trace" policy, taking particular care to remove all litter and bury all human waste. There is a drinking water tap near the water trough by the fence surrounding the woodland and a simple earth toilet at the north side of the island.

Keys

A key is required for the bothy shutters and side door which, after booking and payment, can be collected within opening hours from one of the following locations:

- Castle Ward, Strangford, 028 44881204, (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm and some weekends)
- Rowallane House, Saintfield, 028 97512366, (Mon – Fri 9am-5pm),
- Murlough National Nature Reserve, Dundrum 028 43751467 (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm),
- Killyleagh Outdoor Education Centre, marie.burns@seelb.org.uk / 028 44828511, (Mon – Fri 9am-2pm),
- House of Sport, Upper Malone Rd, Belfast, Mikemcclure@sportni.net /028 90381222, (Mon – Fri 9am-5pm but keys can be collected until 9pm if pre-arranged).

Please note, these venues are not open 24hrs so it is **vital that you phone ahead to arrange a convenient time to collect and return the keys.**

Conditions of use and bothy ethos

The National Trust has made the island available for use in the understanding that all visitors will take an active role in the maintenance and upkeep of the bothy and island.

Please remember that this is a bothy and not a hotel. There are no members of staff responsible for regular maintenance and house keeping. After you leave, nobody will check its condition or clean it before the next group of visitors arrive. If you choose to stay on the island, it is understood that you are also agreeing to help with the maintenance. You can help us by ensuring your group complies with the following:

Please leave the bothy in the condition the following group would expect to find it.

Leave all furnishings and utensils clean and tidied away.

Brush and mop the floor before departure. A floor brush and mop are provided.

There are no litter bins so you must take all your rubbish away with you.

Empty the ash from the wood burning stove and barbecues.

Prevent your group from climbing on the dry stone walls and replace any stones that have fallen off.

Leave the camp site tidy and free from stones and other objects.

The island is often grazed by sheep. Dogs must therefore, be kept under control.

The gate to the camping area in front of the bothy should be left open when the camp site is not in use. This will allow the sheep to graze the grass short, preventing the growth of weeds etc.

Be considerate to the following group and leave dry firewood by the stove.

Please report any breakages or problems to The National Trust.

If the bothy starts to create major maintenance issues for the already overstretched Strangford Lough wardens, The National Trust will be forced to close down the bothy. Please help us to ensure that this doesn't happen.

Further Volunteering

During your stay, there are many other ways you can help us to look after the island and its wildlife. Why not collect litter washed up on the shore or help to repair some of the old walls? You could help by recording any interesting wildlife observations in the bothy's visitor book or enlarge one of the island's ponds. The National Trust has set up a 'Friends of the Bothy' group to help keep the bothy and the island in good order. We also organise regular volunteer projects at other sites around the Strangford Lough area. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Craig McCoy on 07776 462537.

Emergencies

In an emergency, contact the coastguard (999) or The National Trust Strangford Lough wardens on 07776 462537 or 07900 678411.