



**Ireland's Hidden Heartlands:
Challenges, Opportunities and Lessons Learned so far**

Highlands Tourism Conference, 29th November 2022
Paddy Mathews, Fáilte Ireland

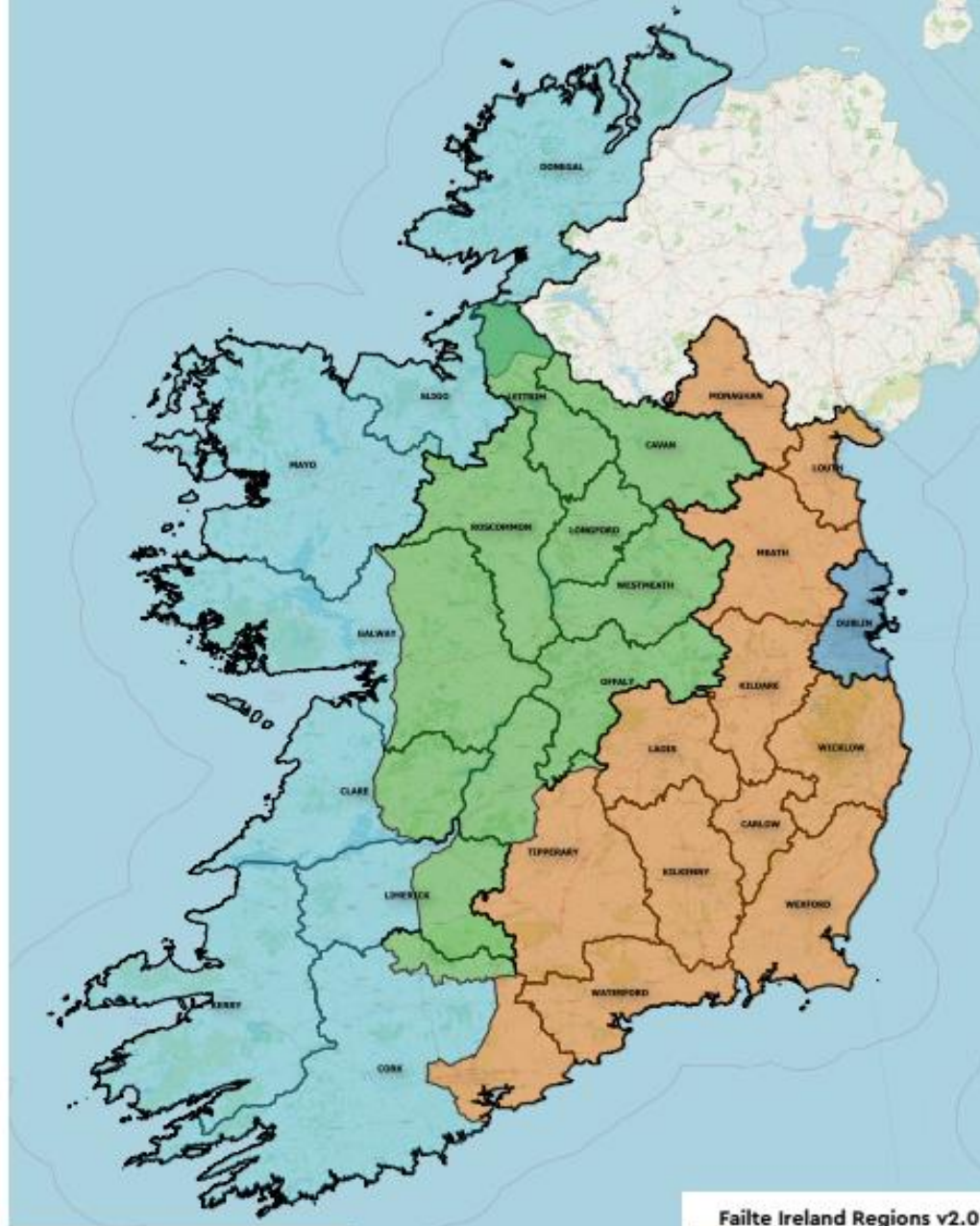




WILD ATLANTIC WAY
SLÍ AN ATLANTAIGH FHIÁIN



**Ireland's Hidden
HEARTLANDS**



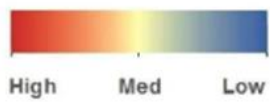
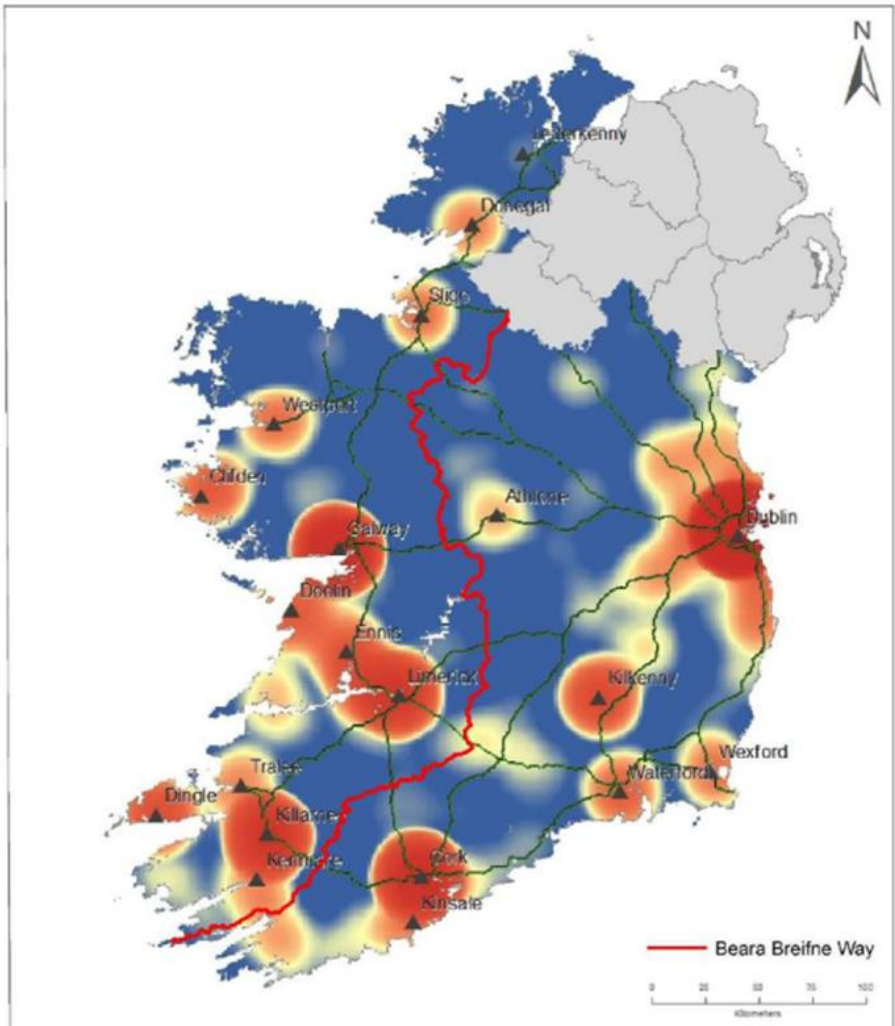
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Fáilte Ireland Regions v2.0

- Ireland's Ancient East
- Ireland's Hidden Heartland
- Wild Atlantic Way
- Dublin



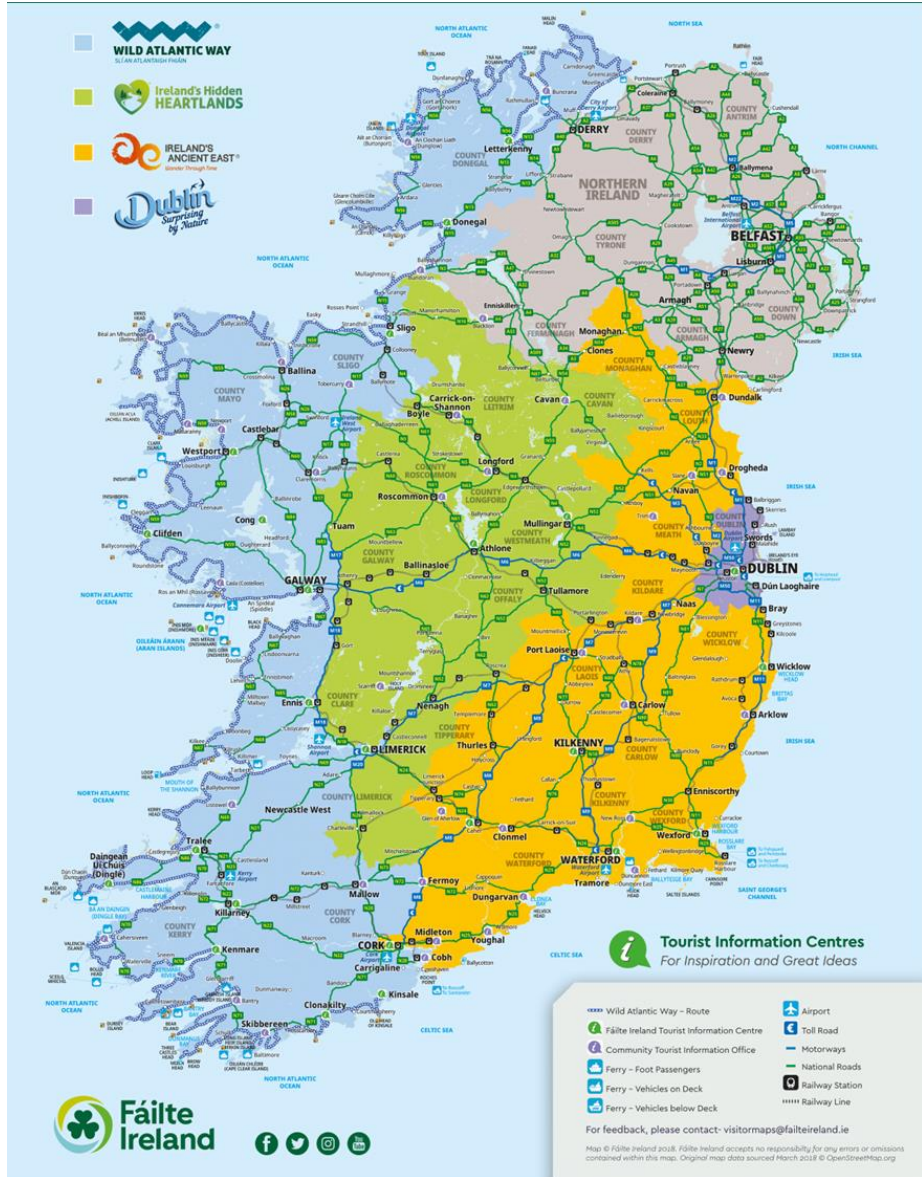
**IRELAND'S
ANCIENT EAST®**
Wander Through Time



The map displays the location of overnight stays in Ireland by overseas tourists during 2017.
 Source: Fáilte Ireland's survey of overseas travellers 2017.



Region	Number of stays
Connacht	2,212,738
Leinster	1,146,238
Munster	852,819
Ulster	477,214
London	263,621
Chicago	212,703
Spain	182,513
Germany	159,134
Italy	117,482



Tourist Information Centres
 For Inspiration and Great Ideas

- Wild Atlantic Way - Route
- Fáilte Ireland Tourist Information Centre
- Community Tourist Information Office
- Ferry - Foot Passengers
- Ferry - Vehicles on Deck
- Ferry - Vehicles below Deck
- Airport
- Toll Road
- Motorways
- National Roads
- Railway Station
- Railway Line

For feedback, please contact: visitmap@failteireland.ie
 Map © Fáilte Ireland 2018. Fáilte Ireland accepts no responsibility for any errors or omissions contained within this map. Original map data sourced March 2018 © OpenStreetMap.org



Ireland's Hidden HEARTLANDS

BRAND PROPOSITION

Explore the green heartlands of Ireland's natural rural beauty, where activity and relaxation are centred around rural communities and their lifestyles, and can be discovered across a latticework of land and water trails, showcased by the iconic River Shannon and the Beara Breifne Way.

**“Active in Nature...
Yours to Uncover.”**





Ireland's Hidden HEARTLANDS

» SIGNATURE ASSETS:

- Still Water (Lakes & Rivers)
- Lake Island Castles
- Nature (Forests & Bogs)
- Hidden Heritage Gems

» SIGNATURE EXPERIENCES:

- Cruising on the Shannon
- Active in Nature (walking / water-based, etc))
- Family Fun in Nature and on the Water
- Uncovering Hidden Gems
- Angling & Golf





- Arigna Mines Leitrim
- Clonalis House
- Cavan Adventure Centre
- Slow Adventure, Leitrim





The Shed Distillery in Drumshanbo, Co Leitrim



- Mid Ireland Adventure
- Dead Centre Brewing
- Cloughan Farm
- Celtic Roots Studio



Lough Derg Experiences –

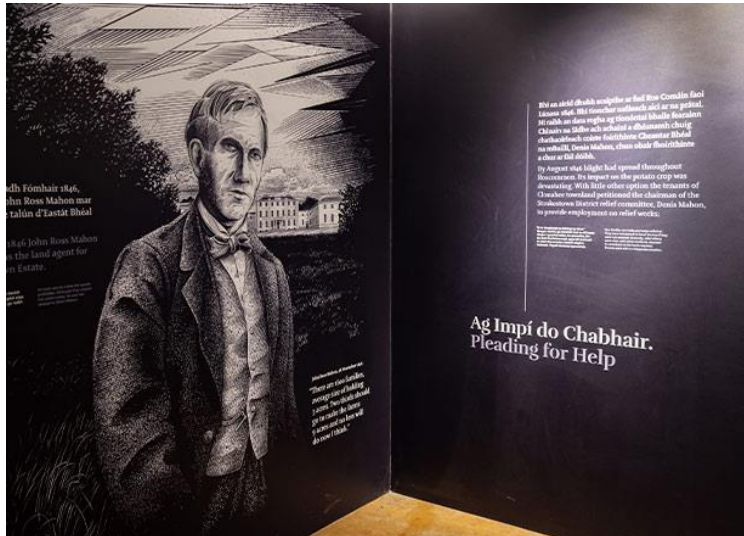
- McKernan Woollen Mills
- Brookfield Farm
- Killaloe River Cruises
- Wilde Irish Chocolates





THE NATIONAL FAMINE MUSEUM

STROKESTOWN PARK





Different Accommodation Options & New Investment

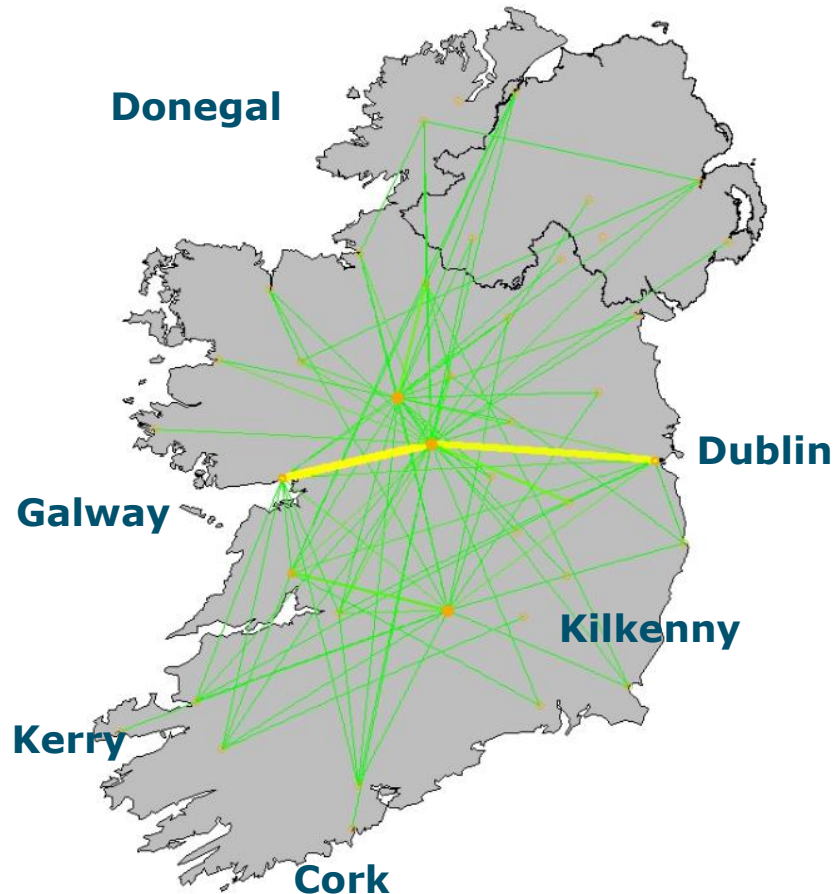


Log Cabins / Alternative Accommodation





Visitor flows in IHH



Ireland's Hidden Heartlands has a high dependence on inter-regional travel with Athlone a central hub connecting Dublin and the Wild Atlantic Way - a key route for overseas visitors.

FLOWS WITHIN BRAND AREA 57%

FLOWS ACROSS BRAND AREA:

WAW	51%
DUBLIN	16%
IAE	15%

51% of IHH visitors have/will travel to areas within the Wild Atlantic Way regional area.



IRELAND'S
HIDDEN HEARTLANDS
REGIONAL
TOURISM DEVELOPMENT
STRATEGY 2023 - 2027

DRAFT

VALUE AND SHARE OF TOURISM IN 2019

€307m

VALUE OF TOURISM IN THE REGION

€178m

REVENUE GENERATED BY OVERSEAS TOURISTS

€129M

REVENUE GENERATED BY REPUBLIC OF IRELAND TOURISTS

7,000

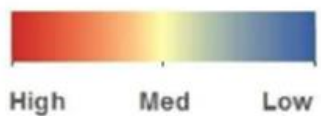
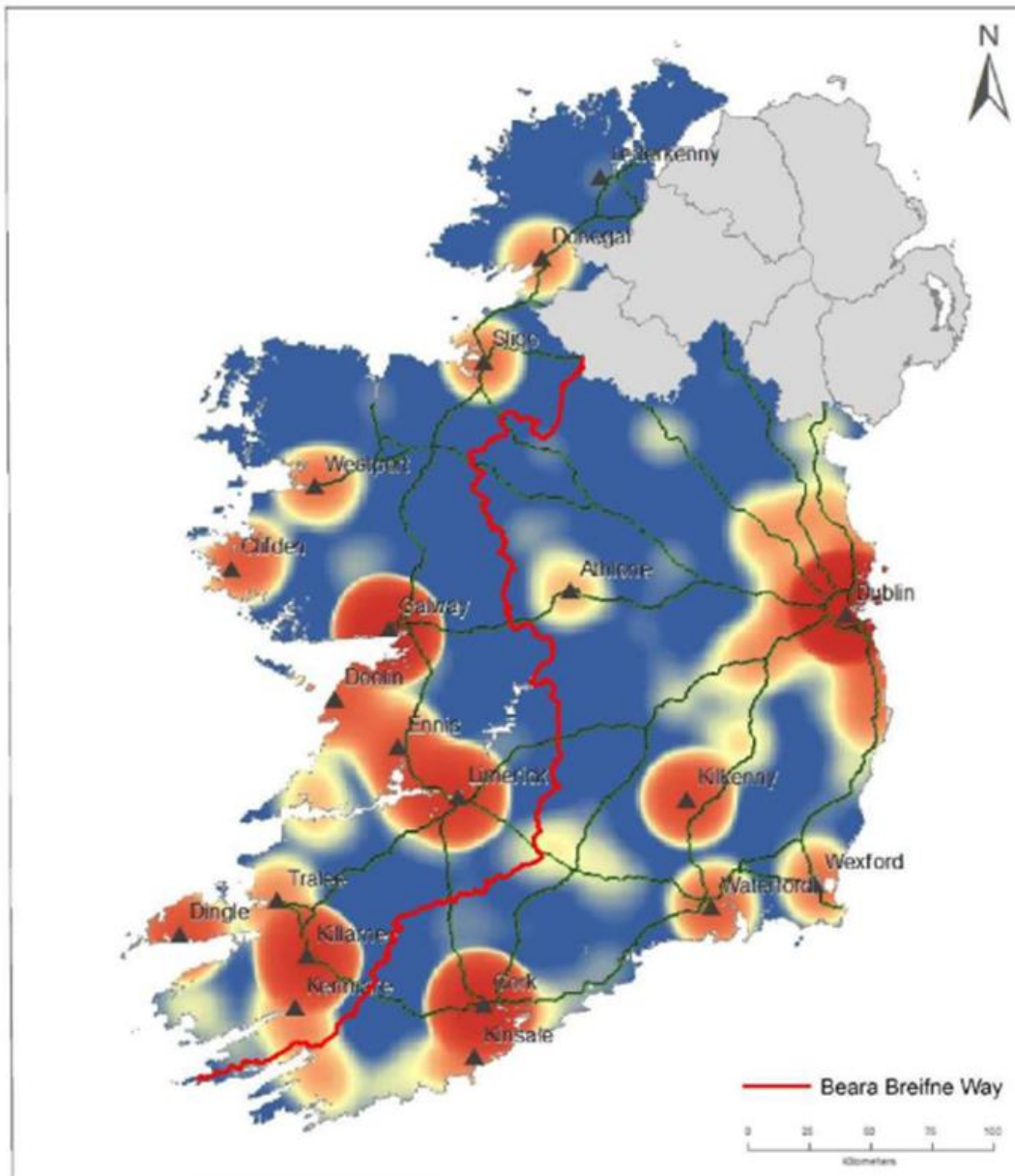
TOURISM JOBS SUPPORTED

4.1%

SHARE OF TOTAL OVERSEAS TOURISTS TO IRELAND

6.7%

SHARE OF TOTAL DOMESTIC TRIPS IN IRELAND

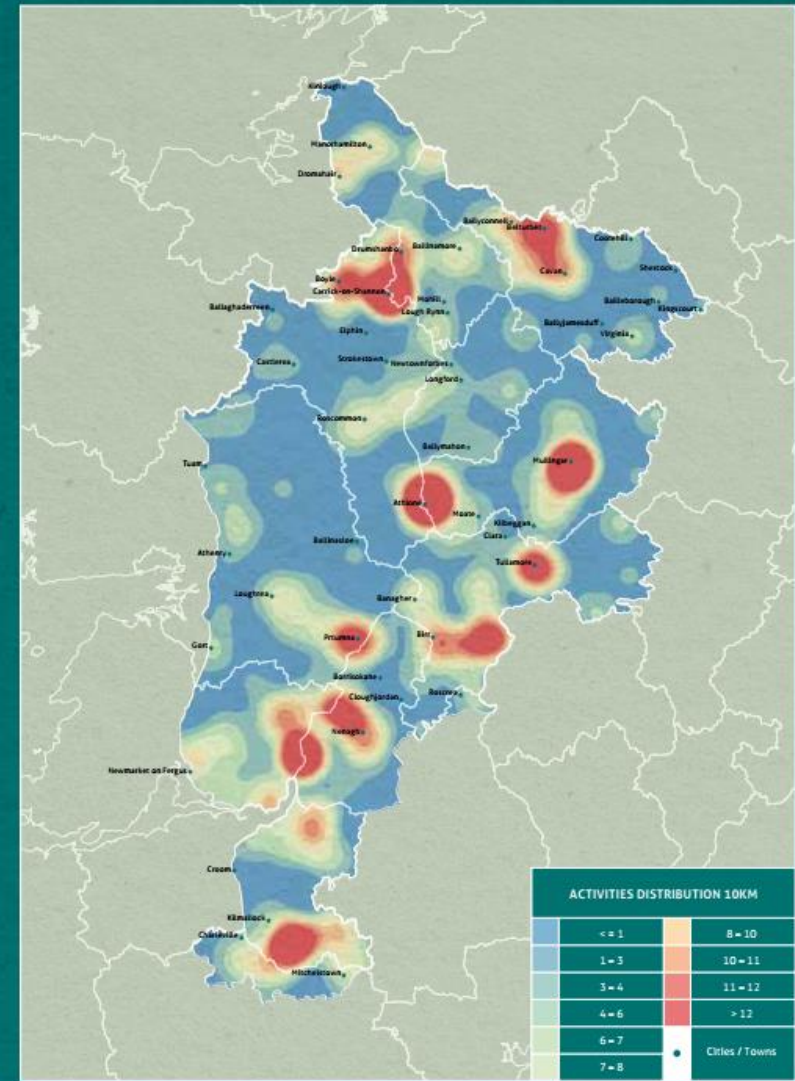


The map displays the location of overnight stays in Ireland by overseas tourists during 2017. Source: Fáilte Ireland's survey of overseas travellers 2017.



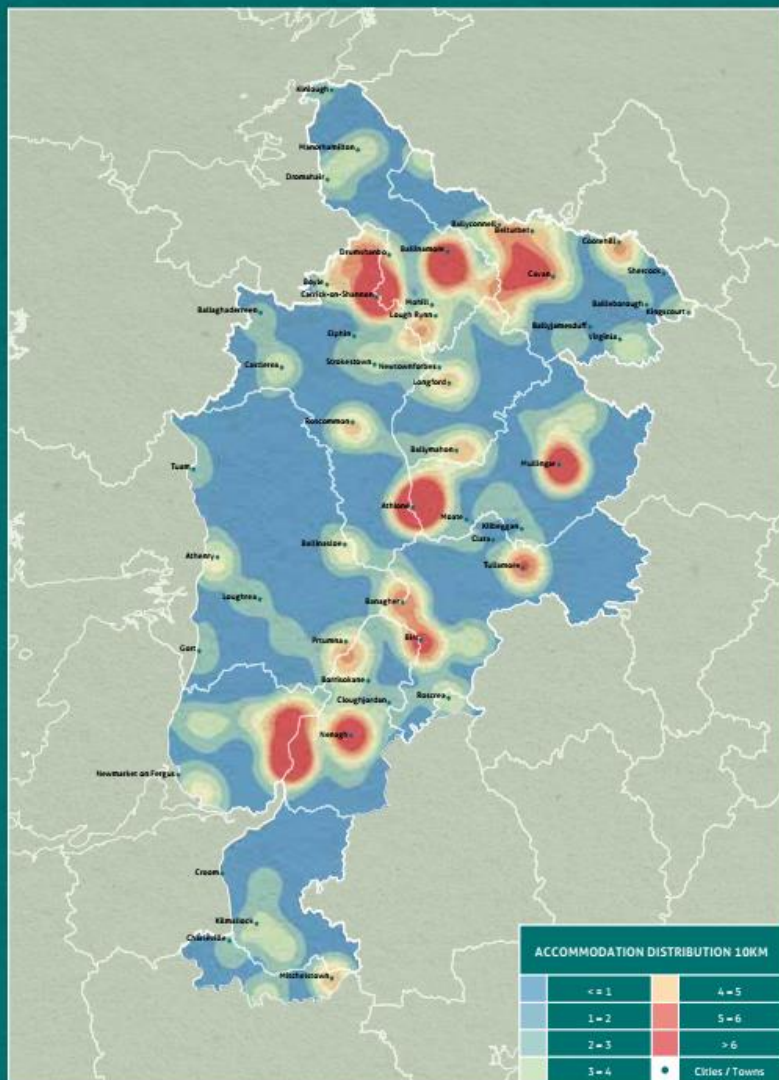
City/Town	Overnight Stays
Dublin	53,10,738
Galway City	1,742,298
Galway City	893,938
Waterford	552,207
Limerick	477,274
Limerick	351,650
Cork	313,705
Cork	183,372
Wexford	129,784
Wexford	117,430

ACTIVITIES DISTRIBUTION - IRELAND'S HIDDEN HEARTLANDS

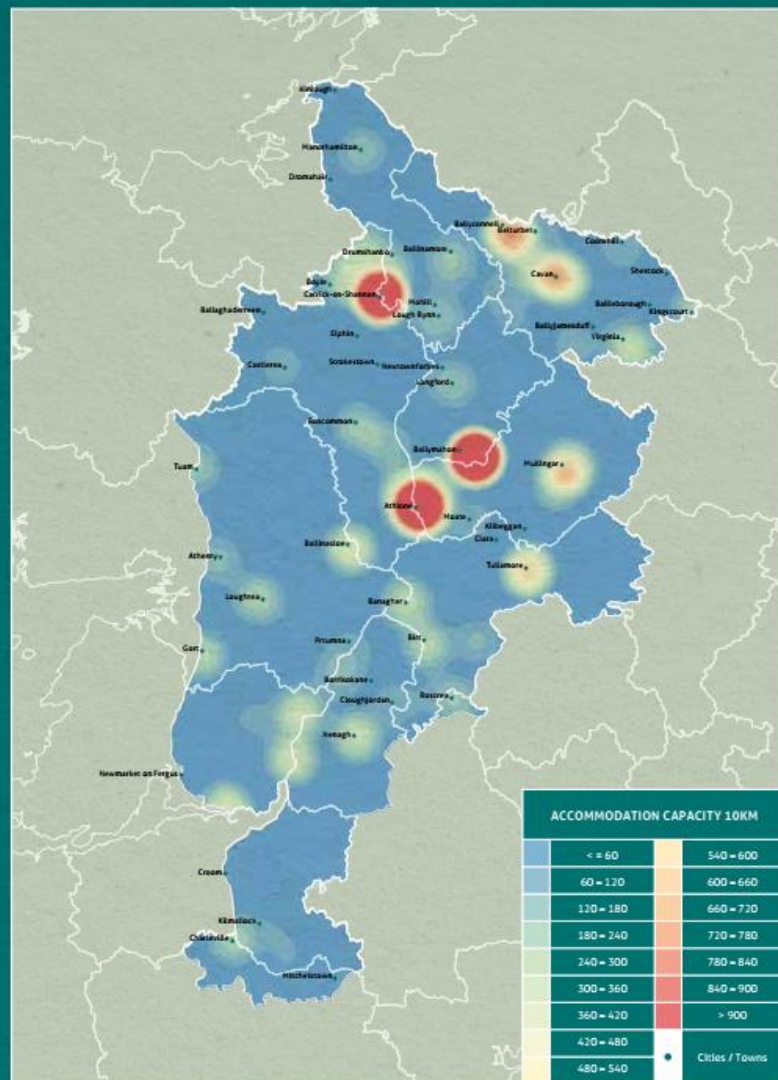


Source: Maplin Technology

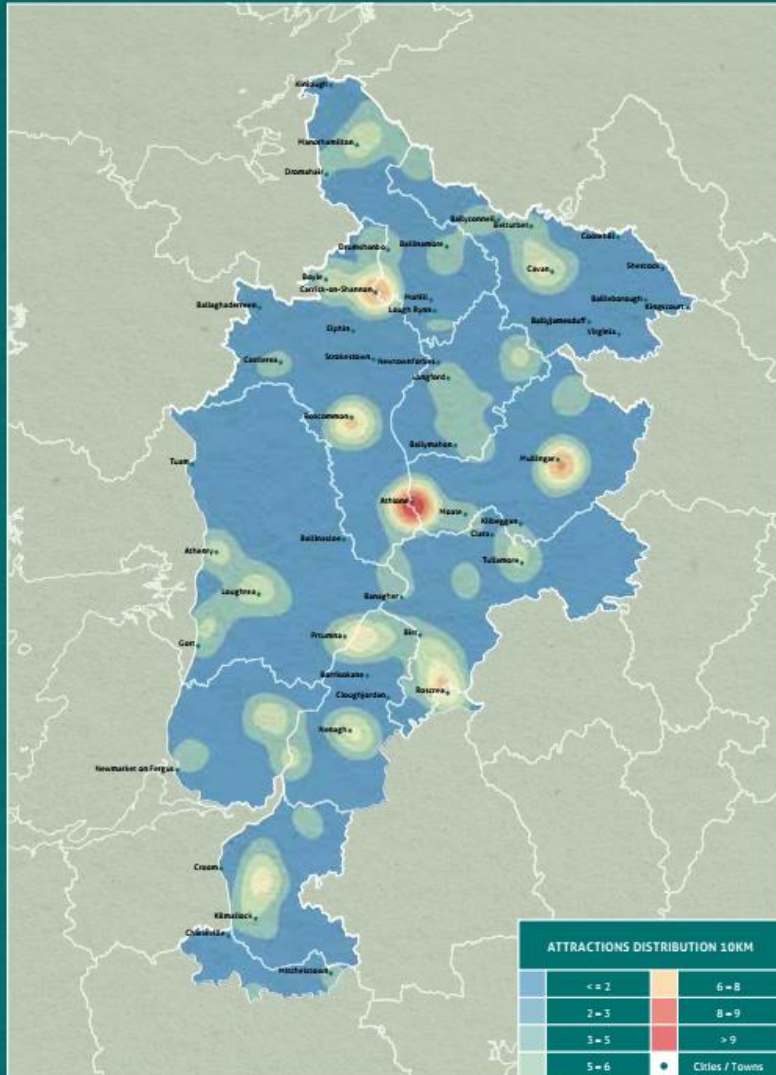
ACCOMMODATION DISTRIBUTION – IRELANDS HIDDEN HEARTLANDS



ACCOMMODATION CAPACITY – IRELANDS HIDDEN HEARTLANDS

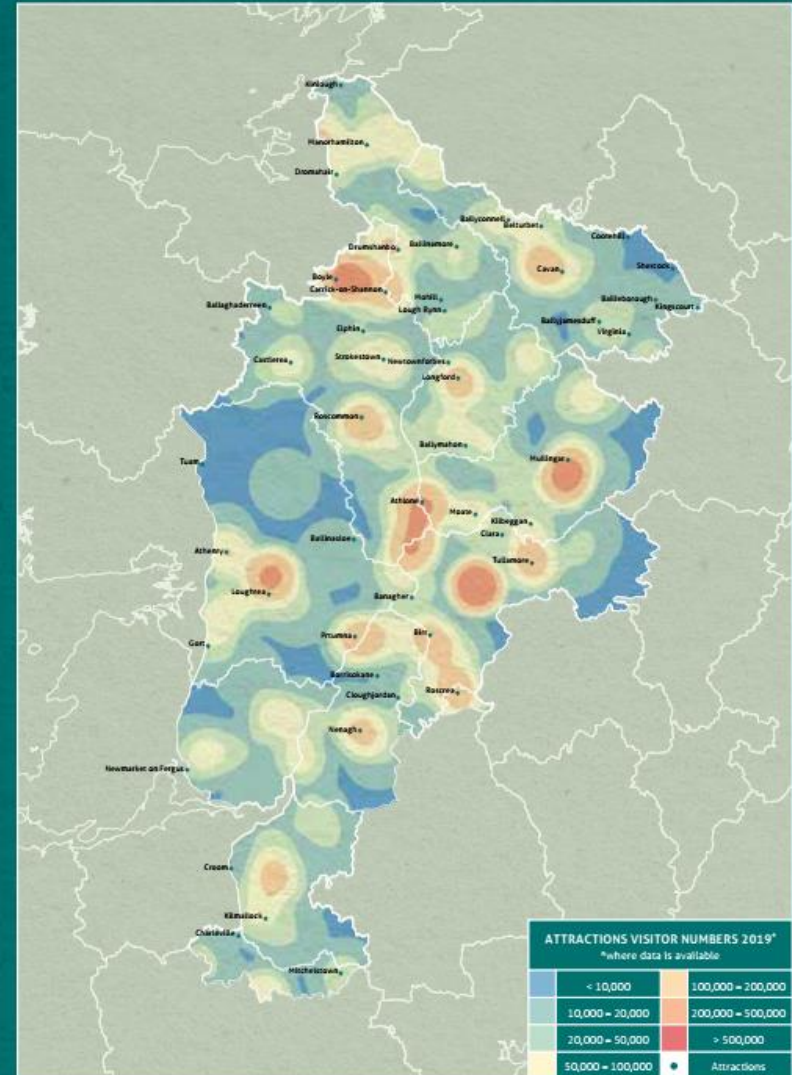


ATTRACTIONS DISTRIBUTION – IRELANDS HIDDEN HEARTLANDS



Source: Millon Technology

ATTRACTIONS VISITOR NUMBERS 2019 – IRELANDS HIDDEN HEARTLANDS



Source: Millon Technology

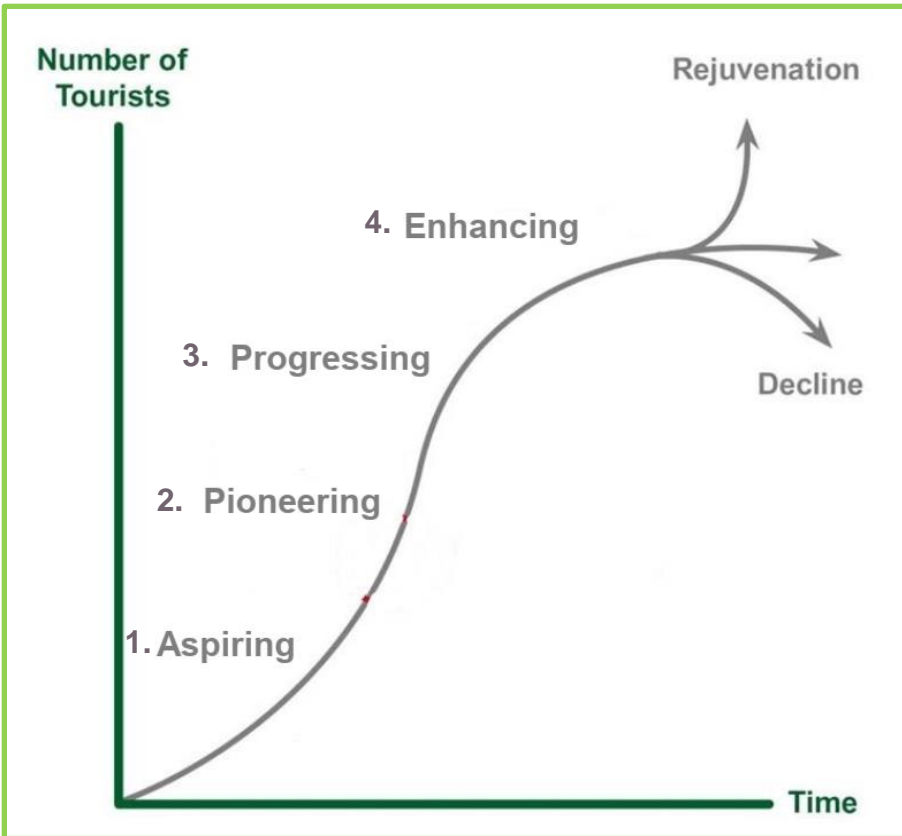
Strategic Challenge Statement



Our strategic challenge for Ireland's Hidden Heartlands is to increase domestic and international awareness and consideration of Ireland's Hidden Heartlands as a distinctive region; and to support the industry in sustainably leveraging the abundance of available natural and cultural assets to develop the compelling visitor experiences that meet and exceed visitors' expectations, resulting in increased visitor revenue and local jobs, while protecting the unique environment of the region.



Destination Maturity



Destination Maturity Model

Enhancing

Progressing

Pioneering

Aspiring

WHERE TO FOCUS

Experience innovation and visitor dispersal

Development of new best in class experiences to attract new visitors

Product development and supporting experiences

Visitor infrastructure and product development

DESTINATION MATURITY - ENHANCING

Established destination with a high international recognition factor

DESTINATION MATURITY - PROGRESSING

Good domestic and development international mark recognition

DESTINATION MATURITY - PIONEERING

Emerging domestic market recognition

DESTINATION MATURITY - ASPIRING

Developing a tourism profile

Establishing networks and capacity building

Improve destination competitiveness

Clear USP and strategy

Effective Industry networks

HOW TO WIN

2.3. OUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1

AWARENESS AND RECOGNITION

Raise awareness and recognition of the region and brand among domestic and international visitors and increase the duration of visitor stays, particularly within the domestic market.

2

VISITOR EXPERIENCES

Enhance the range and quality of our visitor experiences to underpin the Hidden Heartlands brand proposition, leveraging the natural and cultural assets of the region in a sustainable way with a focus on ecotourism.

3

ECONOMIC IMPACT

Grow the economic impact of tourism and create jobs in local tourism by supporting the tourism industry (private, public and community sectors) to develop its capacity and capability while reducing its carbon footprint.

4

REGENERATIVE TOURISM

Establish the region as one of the leading regenerative tourism destinations in Europe with nature and community at its heart.

5

INDUSTRY AND STAKEHOLDER

Build a committed industry and stakeholder coalition to guide and co-ordinate the sustainable development of destinations across the region.



Raising awareness of the region







An aerial photograph of a wide river winding through a lush green landscape. The river reflects the sky, which is filled with soft, pinkish clouds. In the foreground, a small island in the river features a prominent stone tower. The surrounding land is covered in dense forests and green fields, with rolling hills visible in the distance under a vast, colorful sky.

Website Improvement Programme

40 Websites went LIVE in H2 2021 improving the digital shop window for visitors to the region and providing online booking capability

MCKERNAN

HOME ABOUT US SERVICES CONTACT US

IRELAND'S HIDDEN HEARTLANDS

Make a break for it

Make a break for it. Discover the hidden beauty of Ireland's Hidden Heartlands. From the rolling hills of the Wicklow Mountains to the rugged coastline of the Burren, there's something for everyone. Discover the hidden beauty of Ireland's Hidden Heartlands. From the rolling hills of the Wicklow Mountains to the rugged coastline of the Burren, there's something for everyone.

UNCOVER Lough Derg

Play Video ▶

Ireland's Hidden HEARTLANDS

Discover the hidden beauty of Ireland's Hidden Heartlands. From the rolling hills of the Wicklow Mountains to the rugged coastline of the Burren, there's something for everyone. Discover the hidden beauty of Ireland's Hidden Heartlands. From the rolling hills of the Wicklow Mountains to the rugged coastline of the Burren, there's something for everyone.

LEARNING - OUR FLAG

Discover the hidden beauty of Ireland's Hidden Heartlands. From the rolling hills of the Wicklow Mountains to the rugged coastline of the Burren, there's something for everyone. Discover the hidden beauty of Ireland's Hidden Heartlands. From the rolling hills of the Wicklow Mountains to the rugged coastline of the Burren, there's something for everyone.

WISER IS TO GO OUT

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EXPLORE IRELAND'S HIDDEN HEARTLANDS

YOURS TO UNCOVER

Ireland's Hidden HEARTLANDS

EXPLORE THE LUSH GREEN HEARTLANDS OF IRELAND'S NATURAL BEAUTY

Discover the hidden beauty of Ireland's Hidden Heartlands. From the rolling hills of the Wicklow Mountains to the rugged coastline of the Burren, there's something for everyone. Discover the hidden beauty of Ireland's Hidden Heartlands. From the rolling hills of the Wicklow Mountains to the rugged coastline of the Burren, there's something for everyone.

LOOKING TO STAY LONGER?

WHERE TO EAT AND DRINK?

UNCOVER AT HOME

YOUR JOURNEY IS JUST BEGINNING

Tap into the relaxed rhythm of Ireland's Hidden Heartlands

With its rich mix of beautiful landscapes, rugged hills, soft bogs, peaceful lakes and vibrant townscapes, welcome to one of the most surprising and unspoilt parts of Ireland.

Find an Experience to Suit You

Discover

- 1. Museum**
- 2. Learn & Play**
- 3. Adventure**
- 4. Relaxation**
- 5. Food & Drink**
- 6. Staycation**

Looking to stay longer?

Where to eat and drink?

Around Carrick on Shannon

Your journey is just beginning

Ireland's Hidden Heartlands

Discover the hidden beauty of Ireland's Hidden Heartlands. From the rolling hills of the Wicklow Mountains to the rugged coastline of the Burren, there's something for everyone. Discover the hidden beauty of Ireland's Hidden Heartlands. From the rolling hills of the Wicklow Mountains to the rugged coastline of the Burren, there's something for everyone.

Yours to Uncover

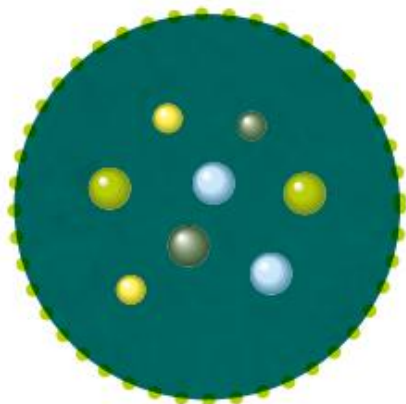
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Find an Experience to Suit You.

Your Journey is Just Beginning

HOW CLUSTERS EVOLVE & GROW

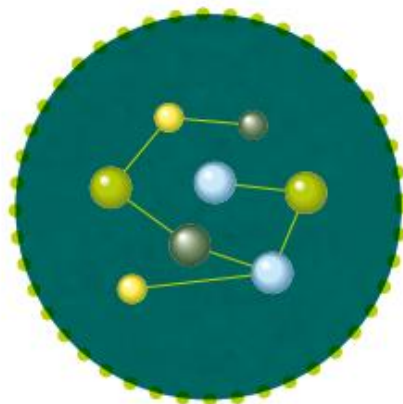
STARTING



Making the decision to get involved in a tourism cluster

Committed to a shared vision for a cluster

DEVELOPING

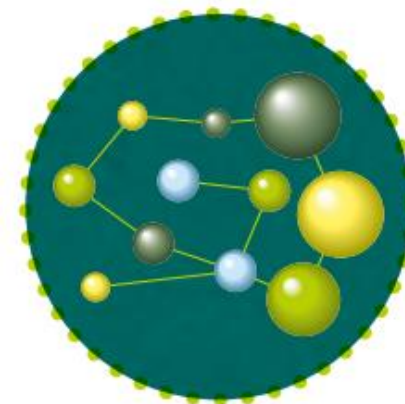


Networking and learning about other businesses

Availing of training supports

Beginning to collaborate with other cluster members

GROWING



Developing packages and itineraries with other cluster members

Developing new experiences with other businesses e.g., food experience combining with activity provider

Joint marketing of cluster experiences

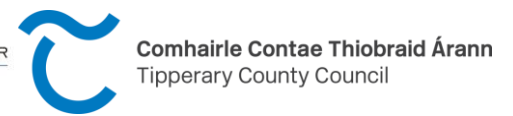
Growing the cluster and welcoming new members



Ireland's Hidden
HEARTLANDS



Lough Derg Destination & Experience Development Plan





Comhairle Contae Thiobraid Árann
Tipperary County Council



COMHAIRLE CONTAE AN CHLAIR
CLARE COUNTY COUNCIL



Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council



Waterways Ireland
Uiscebhéal na hÉireann / Waterways Ireland



Fáilte Ireland



Ireland's Hidden
HEARTLANDS



Iascaich Inne Éireann
Inland Fisheries Ireland



TIPPERARY
LCDC
Local Community Development Committee
Cúirtle an t-Phortair Fobail Árainn
Thiobraid Árann



NTDC
North Tipperary
Development Company



Clare Local
Development
Company



GALWAY RURAL
DEVELOPMENT CO. LTD



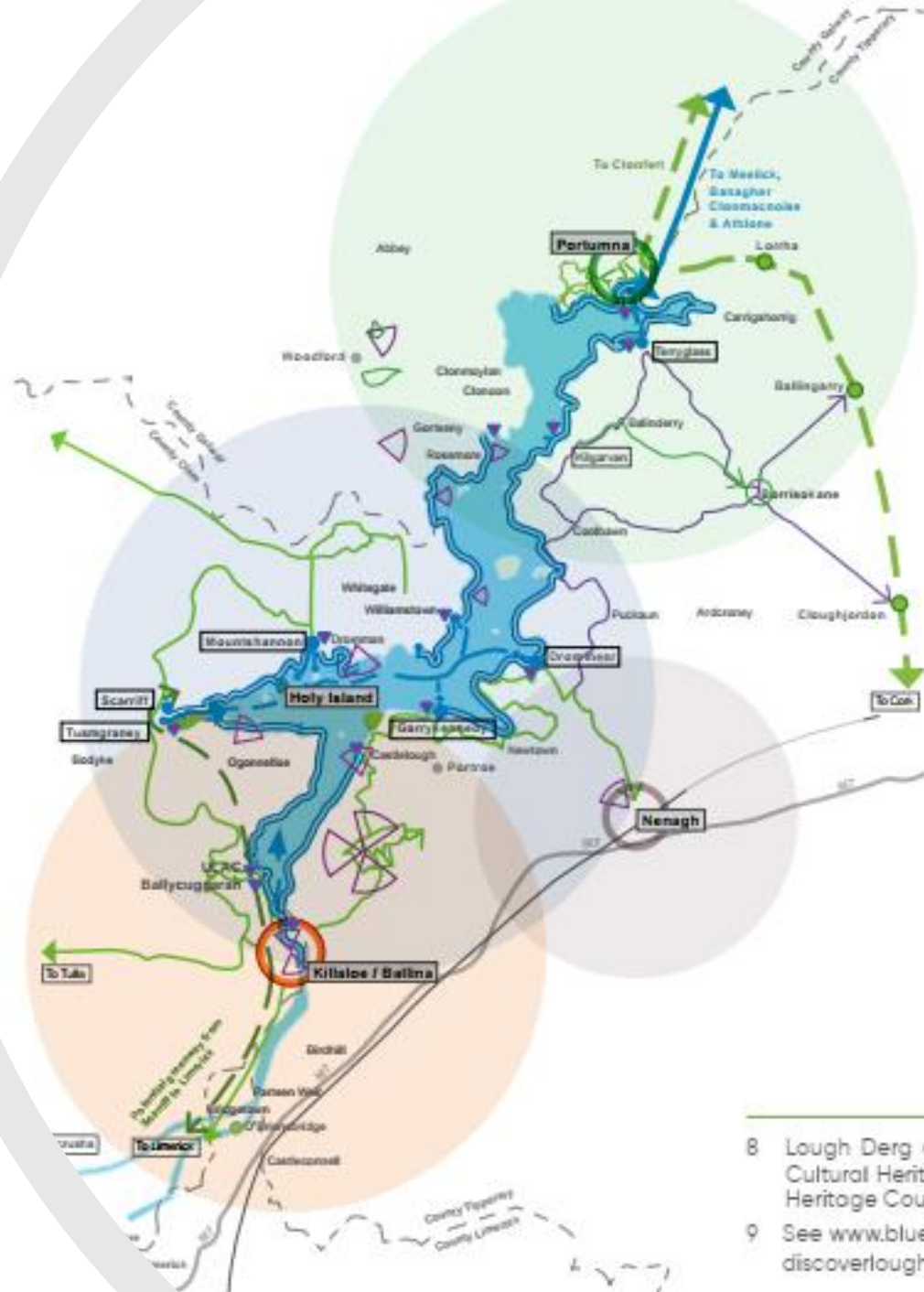
An Roinn Forbartha
Tuaithe agus Pobail
Department of Rural and
Community Development



LEADER



'The European Agricultural Fund
for Rural Development: Europe
investing in rural areas'.



“

“visitors need to know the proximity of places to each other, a sense of destination”

“

“encourage people to stay in an area – clustering”

“

“hubs around the lake”

- 8 Lough Derg on the Shannon Nature Trail, Lough Derg on the Shannon Cultural Heritage Trail, Tipperary, Clare and Galway County Council, the Heritage Council of Ireland, Fáilte Ireland
- 9 See www.bluewaysireland/destinations/loughderg.ie and www.discoverloughderg.ie”

Sustainability



Fáilte
Ireland



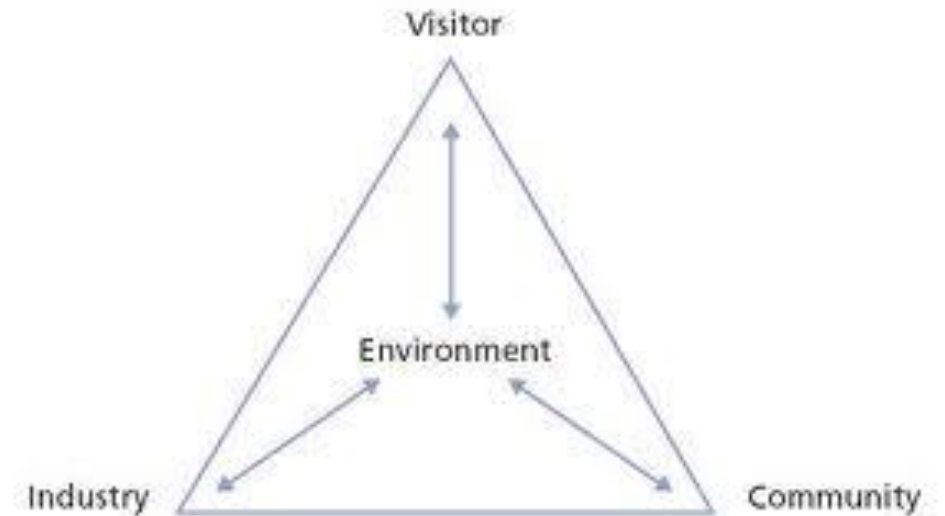
Ireland's Hidden
HEARTLANDS



Our Approach to Sustainability

United Nations World Tourism Organisation
definition of sustainable tourism:

“Tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities”



Driving Climate Action Pillar



KNOWLEDGE &
METRICS



AT THE LEVEL OF THE
BUSINESS



AT DESTINATION
LEVEL



INFORMING POLICY



SUPPORTING CHANGE
THROUGH PROMOTION



The Climate Action Roadmap

A complete guide to climate action planning for tourism businesses



Tourism Green

IRISH TOURISM INDUSTRY

CLIMATE ACTION ROADMAP

10 EXPERT GUIDES
Kickstart your climate journey

+ TOP TIPS
For priority actions

Your carbon footprint EXPLAINED



ENERGY MANAGEMENT

CLIMATE ACTION GUIDE

4 ESSENTIAL STEPS

CALCULATE YOUR CARBON BENCHMARK

+ REDUCE HEATING

A COMMERCIAL TRAVEL GUIDE



WASTE MANAGEMENT

CLIMATE ACTION GUIDE

HOW TO

20+

REDUCING WASTE

INSPIRING WITH CASE STUDIES



WATER MANAGEMENT

CLIMATE ACTION GUIDE

4 STEPS

FOR WATER MANAGEMENT

DISCOVER BUSINESS SPOTLIGHTS

+ CUT COSTS

WITH WATER



Regenerative Tourism

Tourism that works to regenerate communities and nature

Just Transition Funding from EU – 2023-2026



IRELAND'S HIDDEN HEARTLANDS: A different pace

Travel to and within Ireland's Hidden Heartlands without a car –
Explore at a different pace, and sustainably...





892 Assets on the Content Pool



Share your images on www.irelandscontentpool.com, and access thousands of quality tourism assets.



Business Support Hub - Quick Links



Supports
Programme
Schedule

Sales &
Marketing

Operational
Performance

Financial
Planning

HR

Learning Hub

Marketing & Digital – Quick Links

[Keep
Discovering](#)

[Marketing
Toolkits](#)

[Ireland's
Content Pool](#)

[Event Portal](#)

[Manage your
Business
Listing](#)

[Marketing
Toolbox](#)

What is the Shoulder Season Toolkit?



- Your guide to continue leveraging the Keep Discovering campaign throughout autumn and winter.
- Packed with free seasonal marketing assets and expert advice.
- Saves you time and money.
- Will help you reach more visitors and increase bookings during autumn/winter.
- Will help you reach more visitors and increase sales.

[Download Now](#)



Keep Discovering Industry Toolkit



Keep Discovering Industry Toolkit & Shoulder Season Toolkit

40+ FREE Keep Discovering Social Assets

Access to 100s of new Imagery

TIPS for showcasing your tourism business



Paddy Mathews

Paddy.Mathews@failteireland.ie

