



Rock of Cashel

Heritage Sites of Ireland Trade Catalogue 2024

Ireland's Ancient East



Heritage Ireland
OPW

Group Trade Information

1. Groups and trade ... explore more

Bring your group to visit an historic place for a great day out.

- If you are a public group or in the travel trade and have customers for group travel, FIT or MICE our staff are delighted to present memorable experiences at over 70 historic attractions.*
- Our guides excel in customer service and storytelling that enthralls and engrosses the visitor, while offering a unique insight into the extraordinary legacy of Ireland's iconic heritage.
- Join our mailing list for more information on www.heritageireland.ie
- Contact each site directly for booking – details in Groups/Trade Catalogue

2 Group Visit Benefits

- Group Rate – up to 20% off** normal adult admission rate (min. 10 at most sites)
- One free tour leader per group booking
- Free once-off familiarisation visit
- Ability to amend/cancel bookings free of charge
- Coach parking at many of our sites
- Use of tour groups own wireless transmission whisper system allowed. (This does not include open audio loudspeakers.)
- Some of our sites have their own guided wireless transmission system/audio guide provided free of charge.
- Fast track admission for pre-booked groups
- Exclusive guided tours (some sites have specific language guided tours)
- Specific language audio-visual films in some sites for pre-booked tours
- Access to OPW Tour Operator Voucher Scheme (TOVS). Payment by monthly invoice. Email us at toursopsaccounts@opw.ie

*2024 rates will be made available on heritageireland.ie
Children under 12 visit free but must be accompanied by an adult.

**Opening dates are listed as of April 2024. Please confirm exact rates and opening hours with sites directly.

3 Plan Your Itinerary

- For inspiration about passage tombs, historic castles, Christian sites and historic houses and gardens throughout Ireland.
- From brunch to banquets – facilities at sites, varied events, exhibitions and so much more.
 - Wild Atlantic Way
 - Ireland's Ancient East
 - Dublin
 - Ireland's Hidden Heartlands

4 Tour Operators Voucher Scheme – contact us

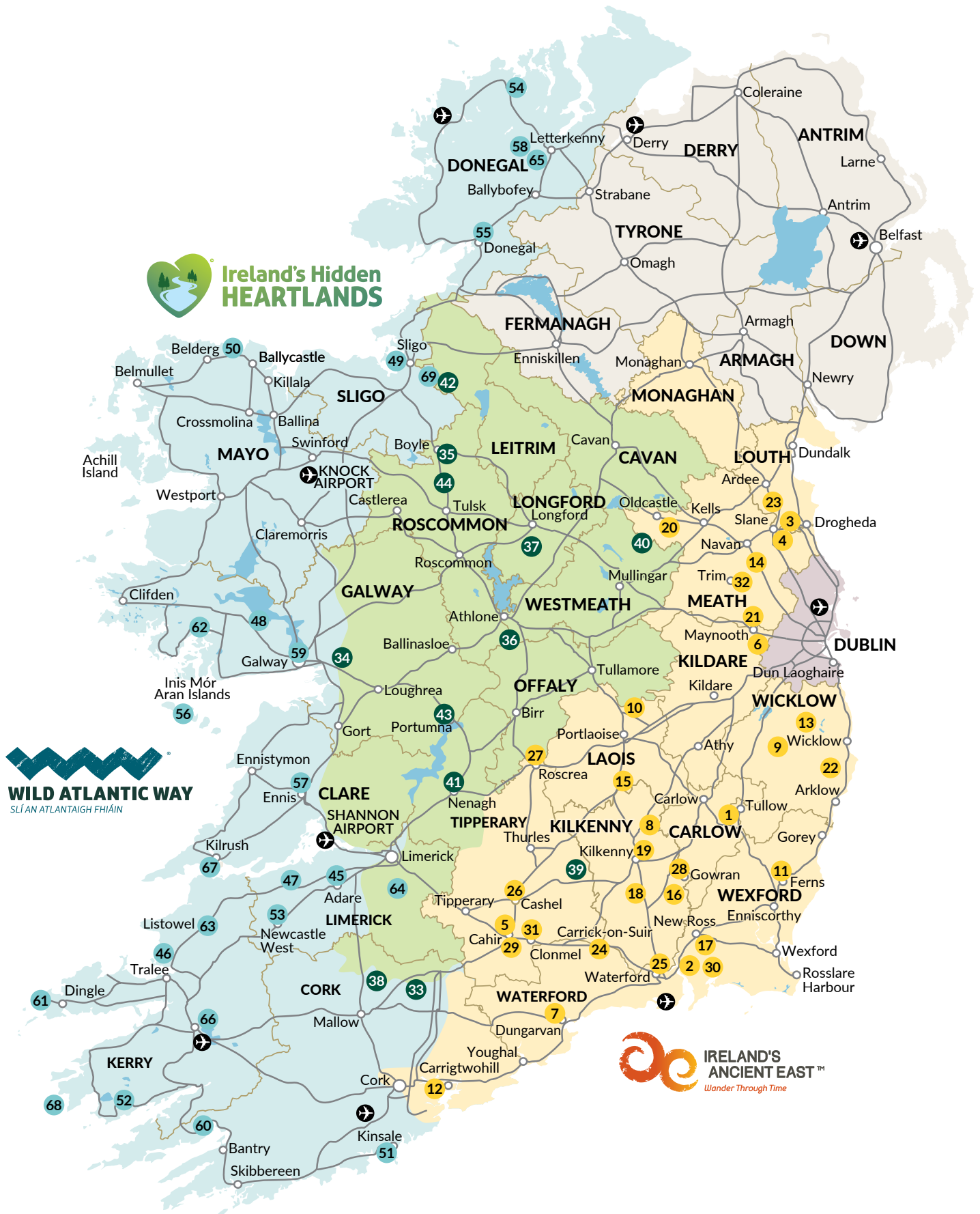
- Visitor Services, Office of Public Works, 20 Lakeside Retail Park, Ballindine Road, Claremorris, Co Mayo, F12 DK30, Ireland.
T: +353 (0)1 647 6000
E: touropsaccounts@opw.ie
- Join our mailing list for more information on www.heritageireland.ie



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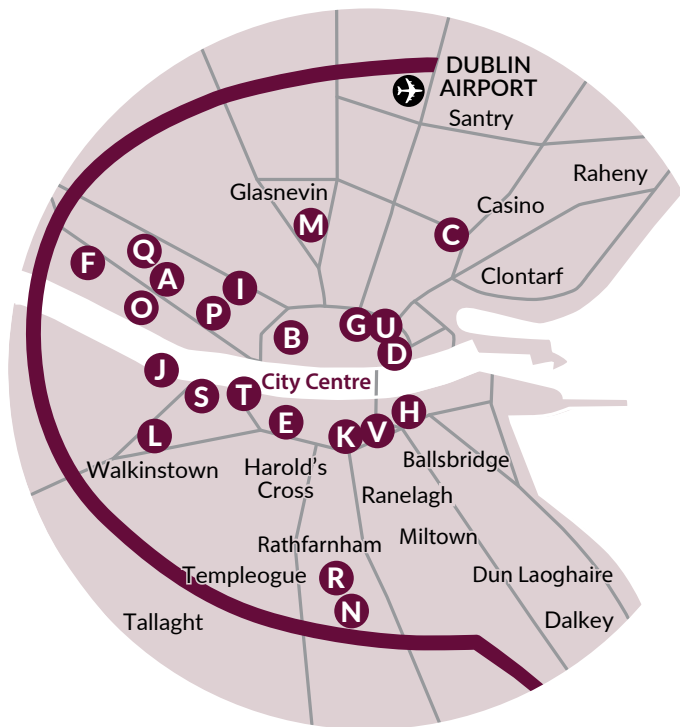
Heritage Services

Ireland's Iconic Heritage Sites



Dublin

- A** Áras an Uachtaráin
- B** Arbour Hill Cemetery
- C** Casino Marino
- D** Custom House Visitor Centre
- E** Dublin Castle
- F** Farmleigh House and Gardens
- G** Garden of Remembrance
- H** Government Buildings
- I** Grangegorman Military Cemetery
- J** Irish National War Memorial Gardens
- K** Iveagh Gardens
- L** Kilmainham Gaol Museum
- M** National Botanic Garden of Ireland – Glasnevin
- N** Pearse Museum – St Enda's Park
- O** Phoenix Park
- P** Phoenix Park – People's Flower Gardens
- Q** Phoenix Park Visitor Centre and Ashtown Castle
- R** Rathfarnham Castle
- S** Royal Hospital Kilmainham
- T** St Audeon's Church and Visitor Centre
- U** St Mary's Abbey – Chapter House
- V** St Stephen's Green



Ireland's Hidden Heartlands

- 33** Anne's Grove
- 34** Athenry Castle
- 35** Boyle Abbey
- 36** Clonmacnoise Monastic Site
- 37** Corlea Iron Age Roadway and Visitor Centre
- 38** Doneraile Court and Estate
- 39** Famine Warehouse 1848
- 40** Fore Abbey
- 41** Nenagh Castle
- 42** Parke's Castle
- 43** Portumna Castle and Gardens
- 44** Rathcroghan Visitor Centre

Ireland's Ancient East

- 1** Altamont Gardens
- 2** Ballyhack Castle
- 3** Battle of the Boyne Visitor Centre – Oldbridge Estate
- 4** Brú na Bóinne Visitor Centre: Newgrange, Knowth and Dowth
- 5** Cahir Castle
- 6** Castletown House and Parklands
- 7** Dungarvan Castle
- 8** Dunmore Cave
- 9** Dwyer McAllister Cottage
- 10** Emo Court and Estate
- 11** Ferns Castle
- 12** Fota Arboretum and Gardens
- 13** Glendalough Monastic Site and Visitor Centre
- 14** Hill of Tara
- 15** Heywood Gardens
- 16** Jerpoint Abbey
- 17** The John F Kennedy Arboretum
- 18** Kells Priory
- 19** Kilkenny Castle
- 20** Loughcrew Megalithic Cemetery
- 21** Maynooth Castle
- 22** National Botanic Garden of Ireland – Kilmacurragh
- 23** Old Mellifont Abbey Monastic Site
- 24** Ormond Castle
- 25** Reginald's Tower and Greyfriars/French Church
- 26** Rock of Cashel
- 27** Roscrea Castle, Gardens and Damer House/Black Mills
- 28** St Mary's Church, Gowran
- 29** The Swiss Cottage
- 30** Tintern Abbey
- 31** The Main Guard
- 32** Trim Castle

Wild Atlantic Way

- 45** Adare Castle
- 46** Ardfert Cathedral
- 47** Askeaton Castle
- 48** Aughnanure Castle
- 49** Carrowmore Megalithic Cemetery
- 50** Céide Fields Neolithic Site and Visitor Centre
- 51** Charles Fort Military Fortress
- 52** Daniel O'Connell House – Derrynane House
- 53** Desmond Castle, Newcastle West
- 54** Doe Castle
- 55** Donegal Castle
- 56** Dún Aonghasa – Ancient Stone Fort
- 57** Ennis Friary
- 58** Glebe Gallery and Garden – Derek Hill House
- 59** Hall of the Red Earl
- 60** Inacullin (Garinish Island)
- 61** Ionad an Blascaoid – The Blasket Centre
- 62** Músaem na bPíarsach agus Páirc Naomh Éanna – Pearse's Cottage and Visitor Centre
- 63** Listowel Castle
- 64** Lough Gur Visitor Centre and Lakeshore Park
- 65** Newmills Corn and Flaxmills
- 66** Ross Castle
- 67** Scatterry Island and Visitor Centre
- 68** Sceilg Mhichíl UNESCO World Heritage Property
- 69** Sligo Abbey



Opening Hours

All year

Daily: 9.00 – 16.00

Closes at 18.30 in summertime to the end of September.

During the winter season, the site may not open due to adverse weather conditions.

In the event of bad weather, please phone +353 (0)59 915 9444 before commencing your journey to avoid disappointment.

Location

Altamont, Tullow, Co. Carlow,
R93 N882

Old world gardens with an atmosphere all of their own.

A large and beautiful estate covering 16 hectares in total, Altamont Gardens is laid out in the style of William Robinson, which strives for 'honest simplicity'. The design situates an excellent plant collection perfectly within the natural landscape, set on the banks of the River Slaney.

Lawns and sculpted yews slope down to a lake ringed by rare trees and rhododendrons. A fascinating walk through the Arboretum, Bog Garden and Ice Age Glen, sheltered by ancient oaks and flanked by huge stone outcrops, leads to the banks of the River Slaney. Visit in summer to experience the glorious perfume of roses and herbaceous plants in the air.

With their careful balance of formal and informal, nature and artistry, Altamont Gardens have a unique – and wholly enchanting – character.

Highlights

- Renowned collection of over 200 varieties of snowdrop – visit in February for the Snow Drop Walk.
- Plant collection of the late Corona North, who bequeathed the property to the Irish State.
- Visit during Carlow Garden Festival July/August.

Visitor Experiences

EXPERIENCE	DESCRIPTION	FITNESS LEVEL	MIN/MAX NUMBERS	DURATION (APPROX.)	PRICE PER PERSON
Snowdrop Walks in February	Advance group bookings required. Tour of the grounds developed by Corona North and the 150 varieties of snow drops.	Moderate. Uneven ground. Suitable footwear and clothing is advised.	Min. N/A Max. N/A	30-60 minutes	Free admission
Rhododendron Walks in May	Advance group bookings required. The collection was started by Fielding Lecky Watson in 1924.	Moderate. Uneven ground. Suitable footwear and clothing is advised.	Min. N/A Max. N/A	30-60 minutes	Free admission
Garden Tours	Guided tours of the gardens available, from February onwards. School and other groups by appointment.	Moderate. Uneven ground. Suitable footwear and clothing is advised.	Min. N/A Max. N/A	30-60 minutes	To be confirmed. See heritageireland.ie for details.

On-site Facilities

- Car park on site. Coach parking is limited – contact site to arrange booking.
- Toilets and wheelchair accessible toilets.
- Picnic tables.

Booking Details

T: +353 (0)59 915 9444 **E:** altamontgardens@opw.ie

Parklands/Walks

Dogs are not permitted in the gardens. Dogs on leads are permitted in the surroundings at the front of house and picnic area.

Tea Rooms

Sugar and Spice Tea Rooms in Walled Garden.
Seating capacity: 50 approximately
For bookings **E:** linda@sugarandspice.ie

Nearby

Ferns Castle, St Mary's Church Gowran, Dwyer McAlister Cottage.

Biodiversity

Green Flag Award 2022/2023 – an international scheme that recognises and encourages the provision of good quality parks and green spaces managed in environmentally sustainable ways.

Sustainability

Altamont composts 100% of all shredding and leaves on site, even the tea bags. No pesticides are used and we try to use organic control methods.



Battle of the Boyne Visitor Centre Oldbridge Estate Co Meath



Opening Hours

May – September

Daily: 10.00 – 17.00

October – May

Daily: 9.00 – 16.00

Location

Oldbridge House, Oldbridge, Drogheda,
Co Meath, A92 CY68

Exit 9 – 5km off M1 motorway
Dublin to Belfast

The largest battle ever fought on Irish soil, at stake, the English throne, French dominance of Europe and control of Ireland.

The Battle of the Boyne, between King William III and his father-in-law King James II, was fought on July 1st 1690 (old calendar). It was the largest battle ever fought on Irish soil with 60,000 troops deployed around Oldbridge Village on the banks of the River Boyne. Part of the wars of the Grand Alliance, 13 different nationalities fought for the future of the throne of England, French dominance in Europe and power and control in Ireland.

Situated on 500 acres that take in much of the original battlefield, Oldbridge House today overlooks the battlefield and provides an interpretative center to explore the battle.

The Green Flag-accredited parklands feature extensive gardens, including an unusual sunken octagonal garden, a peach house, an orchard and herbaceous borders, with a café overlooking the Victorian Walled Garden. Throughout the year, outdoor theatre, workshops and events such as cavalry displays and musket demonstrations help to recreate the day that changed Ireland, England and Europe forever.

Highlights

- Original and replica weaponry from the 17th century.
- Laser model of the battle field.
- Award winning Audio visual in Irish, English, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Hindi and Mandarin.
- Beautiful battle site walks on historic 18th century landscape and adjacent to the Boyne Blue Way – canal and river walks.
- Events calendar: outdoor theatre, walks, talks, family events, music events.
- Tea Room serving delicious fare located in Victorian Walled Garden.



Battle of the Boyne Visitor Centre Oldbridge Estate Co Meath

Visitor Experiences

EXPERIENCE	DESCRIPTION	FITNESS LEVEL	MIN/MAX NUMBERS	DURATION (APPROX.)	PRICE PER PERSON
Guided Tour Battle of the Boyne Visitor Centre (Indoor)	Pre-booked guided tours of the Battle of the Boyne Visitor Centre. In the expert hands of an engaging Battle of the Boyne guide, the highlights tour showcases the background and day of the Battle in 1690, bringing to life the three kings and armies who engaged on the banks of the Boyne. Original, replica weaponry and art. A state of the art laser model of the battlefield explains the logistics on the day. The tour finishes with an award winning audio visual film in the fully seated AV Room.	Mild. On flat surface – indoors. Wheelchair accessible.	Min. N/A Max. 30	45 minutes	€4.00
Self-guided Tour	The self-guided tour explores the history of the Battle of the Boyne at your own pace, through information panels, original and replica weaponry and artworks. Watch a state of the art laser model of the battlefield that explains the logistics on the day in 1690. Finish your visit with the award winning visual film in the fully seated AV Room.	On flat surfaces – paved or grass. Wheelchair accessible on paved surfaces.	Min. N/A Max. 30	30 minutes	€3.00

On-site Facilities

- Free car parking: capacity 120 cars, 3 coaches.
- Approx. 100m walk from the Visitor Centre.
- Café situated in the Victorian Walled Garden serving hot drinks, snacks and lunch.
- Toilets, wheelchair accessible toilets, baby changing facilities.

Booking Details

E: batleoftheboyne@opw.ie **T:** +353 (0)41 980 9950

Parklands/Walks

Self-guiding walks through the battle site and 18th century estate, adjacent to the Boyne Greenway and canal and river. Dogs on leads allowed on walkways.

Tea Rooms

The Tea Pavilion located in the Walled Garden. Groups must pre-book. **E:** customercare@brambles.ie
T: +353 (41) 984 2921

Nearby

Bru na Boinne (Newgrange, Dowth and Knowth), 8 kms; Old Mellifont Abbey, 8 kms. Near to the historic town of Drogheda, picturesque Slane Village, Franics Ledwidge Musuem and Slane Castle and Whiskey.

Biodiversity

Green Flag and Green Heritage Site Award Holder. Wildflowers that provide food for invertebrates and birds such as Goldfinches who need the smaller seeds to feed. A Linnet and Skylark plot were established many years ago

and these encourage ground nesting birds. These plots also attract Yellowhammers. A strip of Caledonian Kale has been planted which provides food for many invertebrates and birds such as Greenfinches, Chaffinches, Reed bunting and Brambling. Beetle banks are well established throughout the site, as are bat boxes.

Acres of native and exotic trees - an ongoing tree planting programme aims to replace any trees we lose, and indeed it helps to increase the number of trees on site. Buzzards, which up until recently were endangered, are often both visible and indeed audible on the estate. Kestrels and pheasants are also regulars.

We have been privileged to be chosen as a nesting site for Long-eared Owls. Since 2017 Oldbridge is part of the Bumblebee Monitoring Scheme which is run by the National Biodiversity Data Centre. Both our formal planting scheme in the Walled Garden and the profusion of native wildflowers in our meadows provide food for our native bees. We also facilitate local beekeepers who keep hives of honeybees on site.

Sustainability

The 1.9km long, walking and cycling facility, of the Boyne Greenway, connects the town of Drogheda with the Oldbridge Estate. The Visitor Centre is primarily powered by renewable energy – wood pellet heating system.

Rain water and well water is used to water plants in the Walled Garden. Registered with the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and the Marine for plant traceability and plant health.



Brú na Bóinne Visitor Centre Newgrange, Knowth & Dowth Co Meath



Opening Hours

Tours to the monuments operate within the opening times of the Visitor Centre.

February, March & April

Daily: 9.30 – 16.45

May, June, July & August

Daily: 9.00 – 17.15

September

Daily: 9.00 – 17.15

October November, December* & January

Daily: 9.00 – 16.15

*Earlier opening on winter-solstice mornings (19th – 23rd December) with regular options suspended

Closed 24th – 27th December inclusive

Winter schedule operates from November to February (inclusive) when Knowth is closed. Any tour experience, which includes Knowth, will not be available during this period.

Location

Brú na Bóinne Visitor Centre, Donore, Drogheda, Co Meath, A92 EH5C

Step into Ireland's richest archaeological landscape.

Brú na Bóinne is Ireland's richest archaeological landscape and a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

It is dominated by the three great passage tombs of Knowth, Newgrange and Dowth. These amazing structures represent the creative and cultural pinnacle of the Neolithic society that lived along the river Boyne 5,000 years.

The Visitor Centre is the starting point of all visits to Newgrange and Knowth. It houses a state-of-the-art immersive exhibition which provides a fascinating snapshot of Neolithic life. Shuttle busses transport visitors to see Newgrange and Knowth. The principal tour experience is the Brú na Bóinne Tour + Newgrange Chamber which combines both sites. There are a number of other tour experiences available for shorter visits.

With over 600 decorated stones, Brú na Bóinne contains the largest collection of megalithic art in Europe. At Knowth there is a new interactive exhibition dedicated to this extraordinary gallery. Knowth contains the largest passage tomb in Europe surrounded by 18 smaller tombs and is truly one of the great glories of the ancient world.

The chamber at Newgrange is an awe-inspiring and a reminder of engineering expertise of the builders. The exterior is equally impressive with stunning examples of megalithic art.

Highlights

- Guided tours to Newgrange and/or Knowth.
- Shuttle transfer to the monuments.
- State-of-the-art exhibition in the Visitor Centre.
- Audio guides for the exhibition in French, German, Spanish, Italian and Chinese.
- Café and gift shop.
- Temporary exhibitions.



Brú na Bóinne Visitor Centre Newgrange, Knowth & Dowth Co Meath

Visitor Experiences

EXPERIENCE	DESCRIPTION	FITNESS LEVEL	MIN/MAX NUMBERS	DURATION (APPROX.)	PRICE PER PERSON
Brú na Bóinne Tour+ Newgrange Chamber <i>(Principal tour experience available March to October)</i>	Access to exhibition and facilities in Visitor Centre. Guided tour to Knowth and Newgrange. Guided access to Burial Chamber at Newgrange.	Moderate. 300m walk to Visitor Centre from coach/car park. Lift in Visitor Centre. 300m walk from Visitor Centre to shuttle buses. Outdoor for over 2 hours of visit. No shelter. Gravel paths around both monuments. Steps to access. Chamber at Newgrange which is also is low and narrow. Steps to climb to viewing platform on top of Knowth.	Min. 15 Max. 24	3 hours	€18.00 Adult €16.00 Group (10+) €16.00 Senior (age 60+) €12.00 Student/Child (with valid ID/age 12+) €48.00 Family (2 adults & up to 5 children age 12+)
Knowth Tour+ Exhibition <i>(Available March to October)</i>	Access to exhibition and facilities in Visitor Centre. Guided tour at Knowth. Access to the exhibition at Knowth. (Newgrange not included)	<i>(same as above)</i>	Min. 15 Max. 24	2 hours	€10.00 Adult €8.00 Group (10+) €8.00 Senior (age 60+) €5.00 Student/Child (with valid ID/age 12+) €25.00 Family (2 adults & up to 5 children age 12+)
Newgrange Tour + Exhibition <i>(Available all year)</i>	Access to exhibition and facilities in Visitor Centre. Guided tour at Newgrange. Access to the Chamber at Newgrange. (Knowth not included)	<i>(same as above)</i>	Min. 15 Max. 24	2 hours	€10.00 Adult €8.00 Group (10+) €8.00 Senior (age 60+) €5.00 Student/Child (with valid ID/age 12+) €25.00 Family (2 adults & up to 5 children age 12+)
Newgrange OUTSIDE ONLY Tour	Access to exhibition and facilities in Visitor Centre. Guided tour of the OUTSIDE of Newgrange. NO access to the Chamber. (Knowth not included)	<i>(same as above)</i>	Min. 15 Max. 24	1hour 45 minutes	€8.00 Adult €6.00 Group (10+) €6.00 Senior (age 60+) €4.00 Student/Child (with valid ID/age 12+) €20.00 Family (2 adults & up to 5 children age 12+)
Visitor Centre Exhibition only <i>(Available all year)</i>	Access to exhibition and facilities in Visitor Centre.	<i>(same as above)</i>	Min. 15 Max. 40	45 minutes	€5.00 Adult €4.00 Group (10+) €4.00 Senior (age 60+) €3.00 Student/Child (with valid ID/age 12+) €13.00 Family (2 adults & up to 5 children age 12+)



Brú na Bóinne Visitor Centre Newgrange, Knowth & Dowth Co Meath

Experience Descriptions

All tour experiences start at the Visitor Centre and allow for 45 minutes to see the exhibition before departing on the shuttle buses to see the monuments.

Brú na Bóinne Tour and Newgrange Chamber

After leaving the Visitor Centre, the shuttle bus will stop first at Knowth. The group is met by an OPW guide and are brought around the site. The group will have approximately 1 hour at Knowth. There is a viewing platform at the top of the mound

After the tour, there is an opportunity to explore the exhibition buildings, which are beside the bus pick-up point. One exhibition is dedicated to the 40-year excavation programme at Knowth. The other exhibition explores the megalithic art collection with interactive screens and has an audio-visual film. The toilet facilities are in this area.

The chambers at Knowth are closed to the public.

The shuttle buses will collect the group and continue to Newgrange. On arrival, an OPW guide will meet the group. There is a short introduction at the entrance before dividing the group into two smaller groups to enter the chamber.

Visitors are asked to leave all luggage, large or small, in the secure containers provided.

There will also be time to explore the exterior of the site.

Limited toilet facilities are located across the road.

There is a gravel path around both sites. Access is very limited for visitors with mobility issues.

Knowth Tour and Exhibition

After leaving the Visitor Centre, there is a 5-minute (3km) shuttle bus journey to Knowth. The group is met by an OPW guide and are brought around the site. The group will have approximately 1 hour at Knowth. There is a viewing platform at the top of the mound

After the tour, there is an opportunity to explore the exhibition buildings, which are beside the bus pick-up point. One exhibition is dedicated to the 40-year excavation programme at Knowth. The other exhibition explores the megalithic art collection with interactive screens and has an audio-visual film.

The toilet facilities are in this area. There is a gravel path around the site. Access is very limited for visitors with mobility issues.

The chambers at Knowth are closed to the public.

Newgrange is not included in this tour experience.

Newgrange Tour and Exhibition

After leaving the Visitor Centre, there is a 5-minute (3km) shuttle bus journey to Newgrange. At Newgrange, an OPW guide will meet the group. There is a short introduction at the entrance before dividing the group into two smaller groups to enter the chamber.

Visitors are asked to leave all luggage, large or small, in the secure containers provided.

There will also be time to explore the exterior of the site.

Limited toilet facilities are located across the road.

There is a gravel path around the site. Access is very limited for visitors with mobility issues.

Knowth is not included in this tour experience.

Visitor Centre Exhibition Only

The exhibition is a state of the art, immersive experience. It provides a snap shot of Neolithic life, when Brú na Bóinne contained some of the largest buildings in the world. It explores the seasonal nature of stone age society and the significance of the solar cycle. It also explains the monument building process and explores megalithic art and ceremonies. There is full-scale partial replica of the passage and chamber at Newgrange where the winter solstice sunlight phenomenon is simulated.

The text of the exhibition is in Irish and English. Audio-guides are available free in Spanish, German, Italian, Chinese and French. The lower level of the Visitor Centre contains the toilet facilities, café with seating for 110, gift shop and a temporary exhibition space. The Visitor Centre is fully wheelchair accessible. Wheelchairs are also available to borrow during the visit.

All tour experiences include the Visitor Centre.

On-site Facilities

- Free car, coach & motorbike parking
- 8 coach spaces, 3 disabled car spaces, 3 motorbike spaces, 120 car spaces
- Parking is 300m walk from Visitor Centre
- Toilets in Visitor Centre, Newgrange and Knowth
- Universal access toilets in Visitor Centre and Knowth
- Baby changing in Visitor Centre
- Café
- Gift shop
- Fáilte Ireland Tourist Information Kiosk
- Visitor centre full universal access – wheel chairs are available to borrow
- Shuttle buses have universal access

Brú na Bóinne Visitor Centre Newgrange, Knowth & Dowth Co Meath

Booking Details

E: brunanboinne@opw.ie **T:** +353 (0)41 988 0300

W: heritageireland.ie

Languages

Irish, English, French and German.

Parklands/Walks

N/A

Tea Rooms

Brambles Café (110 seats)

E: customercare@brambles.ie **T:** +353 (0)41 981 4888

www.brambles.ie

Nearby

Battle of the Boyne Visitor Centre, 7km (10 min drive)

Old Mellifont Abbey, 14km (15 minute drive)

Frances Ledwidge Museum, 9km (11 minute drive)

Slane Castle and Distillery, 10km (15 min drive)

Biodiversity

The grounds of Brú na Bóinne centre (Newgrange & Knowth) are planted entirely with native plants. Willow and hazel are coppiced to make wattle fences. Abundance of wild flowers, animals and plants to see.

Sustainability

- 2015 Irish Responsible Tourism Awards.
- Silver Award Winner 2015 for Best Cultural Heritage Attraction.
- Shuttle bus fleet being upgraded to electric.
- Bottle refill water fountain available.
- All recyclable cups and packaging used in Tea Rooms.



Opening Hours

March to June

Daily: 9.30 – 17.30

Last admission 16.45

June to August

Daily: 9.00 – 18.30

Last admission 17.45

September to October

Daily: 9.30 – 17.30

Last admission 16.45

October to February

Daily: 9.30 – 16.30

Last admission 15.45

**Closed annually from 24th to 30th
December (inclusive)**

Location

Castle Street, Cahir, Co Tipperary,
E21 P652

Junction 10 (2km) off M8 Motorway
(Dublin to Cork) and Junction 11 (4km)
off M8 (Cork to Dublin)

A defensive powerhouse of the 13th century.

Begun in the early 13th century and enlarged in subsequent centuries, Cahir Castle stands on a rocky island in the River Suir which has been fortified since the 3rd century AD. It's well preserved curtain walls, courtyards and buildings are wonderful examples of the craftsmanship of the medieval builders.

Exploring the castle, it doesn't take much to imagine what daily life was like in this medieval fortress. Climb its winding and narrow stairs as others such as Oliver Cromwell have done. Marvel at the Great Hall which in the past has been the scene of both grand entertainment and political events.

Cahir Castle's formidable defenses proved to be impregnable until 1599, when following a three-day siege, it was successfully taken by the forces of Queen Elizabeth I. Learn about the event, the politics of this turbulent period and also the characters involved. The siege exhibition and model help to recreate a sense of what it might have been like on these fateful days in May 1599.

Finally, wander in the footsteps of Hollywood elite such as Stanley Kubrick, Martin Sheen, Richard Burton, Liam Neeson, Matt Damon and others who have all filmed at Cahir Castle over the years.

Highlights

- Authentic interiors. The castle's various tall towers, narrow corridor and winding staircases await your exploration.
- The defences. The castle was cleverly designed to withstand attack from the enemy and to act as a safe place of residence.
- The portcullis – a rare feature in Irish castles.
- Famous as a film location featuring in Excalibur, The Tudors and The Green Knight. EUFCN Film Location Award Winner 2022.

Visitor Experiences

EXPERIENCE	DESCRIPTION	FITNESS LEVEL	MIN/MAX NUMBERS	DURATION (APPROX.)	PRICE PER PERSON
Guided Tour (Outdoors)	Regular guided tours of Cahir Castle with trained tour guide. Pre-booking required for group tours.	Moderate. Uneven surfaces including gravel, cobbles and grass. Wheelchair accessible.	Min. 10 Max. 50	45 minutes	€4.00 Adult Group €3.00 Student Group
Self-guided Tours Cahir Castle (Indoors)	Upper levels of buildings – self-guiding. Exhibitions – <i>Women in Medieval Ireland</i> , <i>The 1599 Siege of Cahir Castle</i> and lastly <i>The 1916 Rising</i> .	Moderate. Access by spiral stairs and straight stairs.	Min. 10 Max. 50	25 minutes	**As part of admission
Audio-visual	<i>Cahir Castle and the Story of Irish Castles</i> – a presentation in our AV theatre with commentary available in Irish, English, French, German, and Italian.	Mild. On flat surfaces – ground floor. Wheelchair accessible.	Min. N/A Max. 55	15 minutes	**As part of admission

On-site Facilities

- Public car parking directly adjacent to castle in the Castle Street car park (70 parking spaces) – paid parking €1.20 per hour.
- Public coach parking directly adjacent to site (six parking bays) – paid parking (€1.20 per hour).
- Toilets, universal access toilets, baby changing.
- Shop (books, children’s wooden swords, etc.)
Summer only.

Booking Details

T: +353 (0)52 744 1011 **E:** cahircastle@opw.ie

Languages

Booklet available in English, French, German, Irish, Italian, Spanish and leaflet in English

Audio-visual (15 minutes) *Cahir Castle and the Story of Irish Castles* a presentation in our AV theatre with commentary available in English, French, German, Irish and Italian.

Parklands/Walks

The Inch Field is a public green space adjacent to castle which offers a pleasant, peaceful experience and stunning views of castle. The beautiful Coronation Riverside Walk starts from the car park adjacent to the castle.

Tea Rooms

None on site but there are numerous cafés and a hotel within 2-3 minute walk.

Nearby

Swiss Cottage, Ormond Castle, Rock of Cashel, The Vee Drive, Fethard Horse Country Experience.

Biodiversity

Home to both long eared and pipistrelle bats, while grey heron, mute swans and mallard ducks are regularly seen on the River Suir which flows outside the castle walls. A flock of domesticated geese is a common sight on the river and in the adjacent Inch Field, a public green area. The Suir is also known for its stocks of brown trout and salmon: trout can often be seen in the river as one approached the main gate of the castle. You may also catch a glimpse of otters and grey squirrels near the castle.

Sustainability

Urban location served by national and local bus services. Located on the Suir Blue Way with a dedicated cycling and walking route.



Opening Hours

End May to end September

Daily: 10.00 – 18.00

Last entry 17.15

Location

Castle Street, Dungarvan,
Co Waterford, X35 DV58

Journey back to the dawn of Anglo-Norman rule in Ireland.

Dating from the early days of the Anglo-Norman settlement in Ireland, Dungarvan Castle is one of the few royal castles in Ireland. For 800 years it was the seat of the Crown's administration in Munster. It was built in 1209 to safeguard the entrance to Dungarvan Harbour, with a polygonal shell keep. This rare design is the earliest structure on site.

Visitors can explore the castle which has an enclosing curtain wall, a corner tower and a gate tower. Within the wall is a two-storey military barracks, which dates from the first half of the 18th century. It was used by the British Army and the Royal Irish Constabulary until 1922. During the Irish Civil War, the Castle was destroyed by the Anti-treaty IRA and subsequently refurbished to serve as the Headquarters of the local Garda Síochána.

Today the Barracks and Castle grounds are open to visitors. The barracks is now the exhibition centre, where visitors can discover and see for themselves what life was like for those who served there. Come discover Dungarvan Castle's long and intriguing history.

Highlights

- South West Corner Tower – a beautiful structure which hosts Civil Wedding Ceremonies.
- Castle still maintains its medieval walls and rare polygonal Shell Keep.
- Art exhibition – William Fraher watercolour collection.

Visitor Experiences

EXPERIENCE	DESCRIPTION	FITNESS LEVEL	MIN/MAX NUMBERS	DURATION (APPROX.)	PRICE PER PERSON
Guided Tour	Free guided tours by knowledgeable Guide Staff who will bring to life Dungarvan Castle's unique history, from its origins as an Anglo Norman Castle to Military Barracks. Pre-booked guided tours for groups. Regular tours also available.	Grounds flat, gravel surface. Indoors: Wheelchair accessible Exhibition Centre. The South West Tower is not wheelchair accessible.	Min. N/A Max. 25	45 minutes	Free admission
Self-guiding Tour Audio-visual and exhibitions	Dungarvan Castle allows visitors to self-guide. The Castle has an excellent Audio-Visual and interactive Exhibition. Explore the Castle Grounds and the South West Tower at your leisure.	Grounds flat, gravel surface. Indoors: Wheelchair accessible Exhibition Centre. The South West Tower is not wheelchair accessible.	Min. N/A Max. 30-35	45 minutes	Free admission

On-site Facilities

- Audio-visual, exhibition, toilets, universal access toilets, baby changing facilities.
- Wedding venue.
- As Dungarvan Castle is located in the town of Dungarvan parking is available nearby. Dungarvan is known for fine restaurants and food festivals.

Booking Details

T: +353 (0)58 48144 **E:** charlesfort@opw.ie

Languages

Leaflets available for €0.50 in the following languages:
Irish, English, French, German, Spanish.

Parklands/Walks

Dungarvan Castle is close to the Greenway, The An Rinn Gaeltacht, the Comeragh Mountains, Nore Valley, Copper Coast and River Blackwater.

Nearby

The Main Guard, Ormond Castle, Swiss Cottage, Cahir Castle, Waterford Crystal, Waterford City.

Biodiversity

Dungarvan town was congratulated by Biodiversity Ireland in 2017 for pollinator planting, Dungarvan Harbour is a special protection area and is home to a number of bird species. The Waterford Greenway begins here. A variety of different landscapes, including the Comeragh Mountains, Nore Valley, Copper Coast and Blackwater River are close by.

Sustainability

Dungarvan Castle is close to the spectacular Waterford Greenway or Déise Greenway – a 46km cycling and hiking trail along the old Mallow/Waterford railway line.



Opening Hours

Year round

Wednesday-Sunday & Bank Holidays

Daily: 9.30 – 17.00

Last entry is one hour before closing

Closed Mondays and Tuesdays

Location

Castlecomer Road, Ballyfoyle,
Kilkenny, R95 A972

Located 10km from Kilkenny City
on the Castlecomer Road

Dunmore Cave is a series of limestone chambers formed over millions of years.

It may be a little difficult to imagine nowadays but around 350 million years ago this area was at the bottom of a shallow tropical sea. The formation of Dunmore Cave was done by erosion, from underground rivers resulting from the melting of ice and snow at the end of the Ice Age.

A visit to the 'Fairy Floor' which is about 50m below surface, where in the 'Cathedral Chamber' you will see a 'flowstone' formation and the 'Buffalo' believed to be around 50,000 years old. On the last stop in the 'Town Hall Chamber' you will see the largest stalagmite in Ireland, believed to be around a million years old.

Dunmore Cave was the site of the massacre of 1,000 people by the Vikings of Dublin in the year 928AD. The cave has been known for many centuries and is first mentioned in the 9th century *Triads of Ireland*, where it is referred to as one of the 'darkest places in Ireland'.

During excavations in 1973 many human remains were uncovered and some artefacts from the site are now housed in the National Museum of Ireland.

Highlights

- See some of the most impressive calcite formations found in any Irish underground structure.
- Limestone caves with various chambers to visit.

Visitor Experiences

EXPERIENCE	DESCRIPTION	FITNESS LEVEL	MIN/MAX NUMBERS	DURATION (APPROX.)	PRICE PER PERSON
Guided Tour	Access by guided tour only. Commencing in the Visitor Centre, visitors are led through the site and deep into the cave and various chambers and fascinating formations.	Moderate. Access for wheelchairs is restricted to the Visitor Centre. Uneven terrain outside and through centre on gravel paths. The site may not be suitable for young children. (3 children to 1 adult)	Min. N/A Max. 50	45 minutes	€4.00 Group

On-site Facilities

- Free car and coach parking.
- Café.

Nearby

Cathedral Church of St. Canices and Round Tower, Kilkenny Castle, The Black Abbey, Rothe House and Garden, Castlecomer Discovery Park, Heywoods Gardens.

Biodiversity

The OPW Biodiversity Action Strategy 2022-2026 involves implementing biodiversity-friendly management measures at heritage sites, including pollinator-friendly grass management; maintaining diverse wild plant communities; sustainable trees management practices; bat friendly low lighting levels; mechanical weed control allowing minimal use of pesticides, chemicals and fertilizers; planting of native varieties, etc at key locations.

Sustainability

In line with the OPW's Sustainability Strategy, we aim to reduce energy consumption and Greenhouse Gas Emissions, avoid the generation of waste through lifecycle thinking and reusing and recycling, commit to 'green procurement' of goods and services, promote the use of public transport, walking and cycling routes to access heritage sites.



Opening Hours

May to September

Daily: 9.30 – 17.00

Location

The Square, Ferns, Co Wexford,
Y21 D892

In Ferns Village (off R745)

Two nations, two cultures and one shared heritage.

Although only half of the castle now stands, what remains is most impressive. The most complete tower contains a beautiful circular chapel, several original fireplaces and a vaulted basement. There is a magnificent view from the top.

There is an extraordinary artefact to be seen in the visitor centre. The Ferns Tapestry showcases the pre-Norman history of the town via the thousand-year-old art of crewel wool embroidery. Stitched by members of the local community, the 15-metre-long tapestry comprises 25 panels of remarkable accomplishment and beauty.

Take time to hear about the escapades of the native Irish king who invited mercenaries to take over his country. Kidnapping, court intrigue, jousting, battles, conquest and love all play a part in the history of this castle

Traverse the tricky stairs, see the beautiful chapel and take time on the roof to survey the land before you!

The site has a display of replica armor for visitors to try on. Learn what it was like to be a knight's squire. Find out how to dress a knight and prepare him for battle; and then how clean up afterwards!

Highlights

- Thirteenth century medieval castle.
- Free guided tours.
- Check out the amazing tapestry panels.



Visitor Experiences

EXPERIENCE	DESCRIPTION	FITNESS LEVEL	MIN/MAX NUMBERS	DURATION (APPROX.)	PRICE PER PERSON
Guide Tour of Ferns Castle (Indoors)	Pre-booked guided tours of Ferns Castle with trained tour guide, offering a unique insight into the extraordinary legacy of the castle.	Mild. Steep stairs and uneven surfaces. No wheelchair access.	Min. 5 Max. 15	45 minutes	Free admission
Self-guided Tour (Indoors)	A tapestry and living history military display representing the 9th – 20th centuries that enthralls and engrosses the visitor. Learn what it was like to be a knight's squire. Find out how to dress a knight and prepare him for battle.	Mild. Fully accessible.	Min. 5 Max. 10	20 minutes	Free admission

On-site Facilities

- Car parking available in Ferns village. This free public parking is located approx 200 meters away from the castle entrance.
- Coach parking available in Ferns village. Coaches can drop and collect. This free public parking is located approx. 200 meters away from the castle entrance.
- No café.
- Fully accessible public toilets located in the Visitor Centre.

Booking Details

E: fernscastle@opw.ie

Nearby

Enniscorthy Castle, 12km
Vinegar Hill, 13km
Tintern Abbey, 53km
New Ross, 42km

Biodiversity

The site is located within a grassed area, with a boundary of trees on one side. The grass allows for picnics or the opportunity to relax and unwind. At the opposite end of the village, approx. 5km away lies a collection of Monuments located in a graveyard and field, accessible by a stile. The whole collection allow visitors a chance to admire the local flora and fauna in addition to the unique estuary landscape and environment.

Sustainability

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Opening Hours

Open all year

October to March
Daily: 8.30 -17.00

April & September
Daily: 8.30 – 19.00

May to August
Daily: 8.30 – 21.00

Location

Ballinakill, Co Laois, R32 K4V6

7km southeast from Abbeyleix, off R432 to Ballinakill, adjacent to the grounds of Heywood Community School

Discover a tranquil and romantic hillside landscape.

The entrancing 18th century landscape at Heywood Gardens, near Ballinakill, County Laois, consists of gardens, lakes, woodland and some exciting architectural features. The park is set into a sweeping hillside. The vista to the south-east takes in seven counties.

The architect Sir Edwin Lutyens designed the formal gardens, which are the centrepiece of the property. It is likely that renowned designer Gertrude Jekyll landscaped them.

The gardens are composed of elements linked by a terrace that originally ran along the front of the house. (Sadly, the house is no more.) One of the site's most unusual features is a sunken garden containing an elongated pool, at whose centre stands a grand fountain.

The Heywood experience starts beside the Gate Lodge. Information panels and signage will guide you around the magical Lutyens gardens and the surrounding romantic landscape.

Highlights

- Elliptical pond and loggia in the walled garden. Pleached lime walk and a pergola. There are follies in the romantic landscape (Sham Castle, Claude's seat, etc).
- Twin Trees Art Festival held in August.
- Natalie Naples roses in the Walled Garden.
- *Heterophylla Aspleniifolia*, two ancient *Quercus Robur*.
- Best time to visit Heywood is the summer months as there are lots of herbaceous borders in full bloom.



Visitor Experiences

EXPERIENCE	DESCRIPTION	FITNESS LEVEL	MIN/MAX NUMBERS	DURATION (APPROX.)	PRICE PER PERSON
Guided Tour	Join our expert guides for a guided tour of Heywood gardens. Discover our Natalie Naples roses, elliptical pond and loggia in the walled garden.	Mild. Lake in parklands – deep water caution. Uneven terrain in parklands. Suitable footwear required.	Min. N/A Max. N/A	45 minutes	Free admission
Self-guided Tour	Self-guided walk through the gardens		Min. N/A Max. N/A		Free admission

On-site Facilities

- Car parking
- Toilets.

Booking Details

T: +353 (0)86 810 7916 **E:** heywoodgardens@opw.ie

Nearby

Kilkenny Castle, 27km
Dunmore Cave, 17km
Emo Court, 26km.

Parklands/Walks

Dogs are not permitted on site

Biodiversity

The OPW *Biodiversity Action Plan Strategy 2022-2026*, involves implementing biodiversity-friendly management measures at heritage sites, including pollinator –friendly grass management; maintaining diverse wild plant communities; sustainable trees management practices; bat friendly low lighting levels; mechanical weed control allowing minimal use of pesticides, chemicals and fertilizers; planting of native varieties at various locations.

Sustainability

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Visitor Centre Opening Hours

Year Round

Daily: 10.00 – 18.00

See heritageireland.ie for updates

Location

Castleboy, Tara, Navan, Co Meath,
C15 P44W

An ancient inauguration site of the High Kings of Ireland set in an important archaeological landscape.

Tara of the Kings (Teamhair na Rí) was the royal site of Mide, the fifth province of Ancient Ireland. The title 'King of Tara' always implied a special power. The right to rule was not inherited but was granted by the deities and won by courage, strength and wisdom. The main monuments of the Hill are clustered together on the summit.

There are over 30 visible monuments, some are as old as the Neolithic period (4,000BC - 2,400BC) while the latest were built around 1,000AD. Most had a ritual purpose and it is likely that at least some of the sites were intended for sacred ceremonies and gatherings. Tara has always had a special place in Irish tradition because of the hold it has on the national imagination. An audio-visual show in the 19th century church gives you an introduction to Tara. Guided tours of the site will help you understand the story of this exceptional place.

Highlights

- Stained glass window in church by renowned artist Evie Hone.
- The Lia Fáil – inauguration stone of the Kings of Tara.
- A 5,000 year old Neolithic passage tomb.
- Over 50 hectares of wide open spaces and breath-taking views.



Visitor Experiences

EXPERIENCE	DESCRIPTION	FITNESS LEVEL	MIN/MAX NUMBERS	DURATION (APPROX.)	PRICE PER PERSON
Guided Tour	Pre-booked audio-visual show in beautiful 19th century church and a guided tour of the principal monuments on the Hill of Tara.	Moderate. Uphill walk on gravel path.	Min. 10 Max. 40	1 hour 15 minutes	Free admission
Self-guided Tour	Self-guided exploration of the ancient capital of Ireland.	Difficult. Uneven surfaces, grass, gravel. Can be slippery when wet.	Min. N/A Max. N/A	30 minutes	Free admission

On-site Facilities

- Free car and coach parking.
- Toilets and privately run café near car park.
- Information panels.

Booking Details

T: +353 (0)46 902 5903 **E:** hilloftara@opw.ie

Languages

Audio-visual show – a 22 minute show in Irish, English, French, German, Italian and Japanese.

Parklands/Walks

Hill of Tara is open all year round. Dogs must be on leads at all times.

Tea Rooms

None.

Nearby

Bective Abbey, 8km (11 minute drive)

Trim Castle, 16km (19 minute drive)

Navan, 16km (14 minute drive)

Hill of Scyrne, 6km (8 minute drive)

Brú na Bóinne (Newgrange and Knowth), 27km (25 minute drive)

Biodiversity

The Hill of Tara is in the heart of rural Co Meath. A large selection of mammals found in Ireland can be found on Tara Hill – hares, foxes, badgers, red and grey squirrels, rabbits, hedgehogs, pygmy shrew. Grasslands are grazed by sheep to maintain meadows.

Sustainability

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Opening Hours

Closed from December to February

March

Daily: 9.00 – 17.00

April to September

Daily: 9.00 – 15.30

October to November

Daily: 9.00 – 16.00

Location

Thomastown, Co Kilkenny, R95 P523

2km south of Thomastown on the R448, close to Exit 10 off the M9 motorway

The extensive remains of a 12th century Cistercian monastery with an unrivalled collection of figurative sculpture dating from the 12th to 16th centuries.

Founded in the 12th century, Jerpoint Abbey is one of the best examples of a medieval Cistercian Abbey in Ireland. The architectural styles within the church, constructed in the late 12th century, reflect the transition from Romanesque to Gothic architecture. The tower and cloister date to the 15th century.

Jerpoint is renowned for its detailed stone sculptures found throughout the monastery. Dating from the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries these include mensa tombs from the O'Tunney school, an exquisite incised depiction of two 13th century knights, the decorated cloister arcades along with other effigies and memorials. Children can explore the abbey with a treasure hunt available in the nearby visitor centre. Search the abbey to discover saints, patrons, knights, exotic animals and mythological creatures. A small but informative visitor centre houses an excellent exhibition.

Highlights

- Extensive remains of a 12th century monastery, including, nave, chancel and transepts, church, chapter house, location of refectory, kitchen, warming room, dormitories, cellar.
- Tranquil location and picnic area.
- Short film depicting other Cistercian monasteries in Ireland, and other locations to visit, located in the Chapter House of the medieval monastery.
- Treasure hunt available for children and families.

Visitor Experiences

EXPERIENCE	DESCRIPTION	FITNESS LEVEL	MIN/MAX NUMBERS	DURATION (APPROX.)	PRICE PER PERSON
Guided Tour of Jerpoint Abbey (Indoors & outdoors)	Pre-booked guided tours of Jerpoint Abbey with trained tour guide.	Mild. Uneven surfaces. Wheelchair accessible.	Min. 2 Max. 50	45 minutes	€4.00 Group

On-site Facilities

- Car parking
- Coach parking
- Toilets, wheelchair accessible toilets.

Booking Details

T: +353 (0)56 772 4623 **E:** jerpointabbey@opw.ie

Nearby

Kilkenny Castle, Kells Priory, St Mary's Church Gowran, Dunmore Caves, Mount Juliet Hotel, Jerpoint Glass, Nicholas Mosse Pottery.

Biodiversity

The *OPW Biodiversity Action Strategy 2022-2026* involves implementing biodiversity-friendly management measures at heritage sites, including pollinator-friendly grass management; maintaining diverse wild plant communities; sustainable trees management practices; bat friendly low lighting levels; mechanical weed control allowing minimal use of pesticides, chemicals and fertilizers; planting of native varieties, etc at key locations.

Sustainability

In line with the OPW's Sustainability Strategy, we aim to reduce energy consumption and Greenhouse Gas Emissions, avoid the generation of waste through lifecycle thinking and reusing and recycling, commit to 'green procurement' of goods and services, promote the use of public transport, walking and cycling routes to access heritage sites.



Opening Hours

October to March

Daily: 9.30 – 17.00

April to September

Daily: 9.15 – 17.30

Last admission 30 minutes
before closing

Location

The Parade, Kilkenny, R95 YRK1

15 minutes walk from McDonagh
Railway Station

The Jewel in the crown of an enchanting medieval city.

We look forward to welcoming your group to one of the most prestigious National Historic Properties in Ireland. Kilkenny Castle is ideally situated in the heart of Kilkenny City, which allow visitors to explore our vibrant and compact city. The castle itself, stand on a height and was built by William Marshal, 4th Earl of Pembroke in the 12th century to command the crossing of the River Nore.

In the 14th century, Kilkenny Castle became the principal Irish residence of the powerful Butler Family, Earl, Marquess and Dukes of Ormonde, for almost 600 years. Today, visitors can experience the exuberant spirit of the Victorian age, faithfully brought back to life in the restored Period Rooms of Kilkenny Castle. The Castle Park includes a 21 hectares walled demesne parkland to the south and a formal terraced Rose Garden to the north. The estate overlooks the Nore River and features mature trees and shrubs with an ornamental lake and a children's playground. Kilkenny is a vibrant and compact city which hosts a number of renowned festivals each year.

Highlights

- Exhibition of 17th century Decius Mus Tapestries.
- Picture Gallery with its hand painted hammerbeam roof.
- Events calendar: talks, family events, music events, festivals.
- Moorish Staircase with its carved foliage and animals.
- Parkland & formal Rose Garden.
- Exhibition of the embroidered panels of the Ros Tapestry project.



Visitor Experiences

EXPERIENCE	DESCRIPTION	FITNESS LEVEL	MIN/MAX NUMBERS	DURATION (APPROX.)	PRICE PER PERSON
Self-guided Tour (All year)	Pre-booked self-guided visit of the Period Rooms and exhibition rooms of Kilkenny Castle.	Moderate. Four levels accessible by staircase. Ground floor only wheelchair accessible.	Min. N/A Max. 45	35 minutes	€6.00 Adult €4.00 Student
Guided Tours (All year)	Pre-booked guided tour of the Period Rooms of Kilkenny Castle with an experienced tour guide including exclusive access to the Medieval Foundations, the West Tower and the Ducal Palace Exhibition.	Moderate. Four levels accessible by staircase. Ground floor only wheelchair accessible.	Min. N/A Max. 35	45 minutes	€7.50 Adult €6.00 Student
Unique Experience (Monday to Friday during the months of April to October inclusive)	Pre-booked personalised guided visit of Kilkenny Castle with exclusive access to the Medieval Foundations, the West Tower, the Ducal Palace Exhibition and the Duchess Boardroom and private viewing of pieces from the Ormonde Collection. Suitable for children from 10 years of age.	Moderate. Four levels accessible by staircase. Ground floor and Duchess Boardroom only wheelchair accessible.	Min. N/A Max. 8	90 minutes	€200 Adult €150 (per person Group 1-3) €100 per person (Group 4-8) €50 Child

On-site Facilities

- Toilets, baby changing facilities.

Languages

Information leaflets available in Irish, English, Arabic, Chinese, Dutch, French, German, Hebrew, Italian, Ukrainian, Japanese, Polish, Portuguese, Russian & Spanish.

Audio guide available in Irish, English, French and German. Italian, Spanish and Polish version available.

Free optional 12 minutes audio-visual presentation in English.

Parklands/Walks

Self-guided walks through the 21 hectares of parkland and Rose Garden, children's playground, outdoor café.

Booking Details

T: +353 (0)46 942 3249 **E:** kilkennycastleinfo@opw.ie

Tea Rooms

Located in Victorian Kitchen. Open daily (Castle opening hours). Groups must pre-book.

E: nostalgiacafe65@gmail.com

Parking for Coach/Car

Coach parking is available on the eastern side of the Castle Road leading up to the Castle. At peak times, there is an overflow coach parking area located at the south side of Larchfield. Coach parking is currently free of charge.

Limited on-street parking. Short-term parking is within 1 minute walk and car parks are located from 2 to 14 minutes away. Parking fees apply.

Public Transport Links

Kilkenny City is serviced by national daily bus and rail services. Public bus stop six minute walk away serving Dublin, Cork and Waterford with links to various other locations. The train station is located a 14 minute walk for Kilkenny Castle and there is daily service to Dublin and Waterford.

Biodiversity

There are various biodiversity areas within Kilkenny Castle Park; 15 acres of native woodland, three acres of native wildflower meadows and stone walls on all perimeters. Bird and bat boxes, two bee hives located in the parkland and two floating duck houses can be found on our lake located within our woodland.

Sustainability

Bike hire is available in Kilkenny City from kilkennycyclingtours.com and people can cycle to Kilkenny Castle. Kilkenny Castle is located in the heart of Kilkenny City and is within walking and cycling distance of all the local city attractions.



Opening Hours

End of May until end of August

Daily: 10.00 – 17.00

Location

Corstown, Oldcastle, Co Meath

5,000 year old passage tombs, at the top of County Meath's highest hills.

There are about 30 tombs at Loughcrew in a complex of cairns, sited on four different hills and shown on maps as Sliabh na Cailleí, or The Hills of the Witch.

Legend has it that the Hag or Witch formed the cairns when she jumped from one hill to the next dropping stones from her apron. After she had jumped onto three hills, she still had to get to the fourth and final hill in order to attain great power. In the attempt to get to the last hill, she fell and died. The story says that she is buried where she fell, on the slopes of Patrickstown Hill.

The tombs have dominated the landscape south of Oldcastle for thousands of years and they can be seen from a great distance. Cairn T, on Carnbane East, is the best known and the most visited.

The climb to the top of Carnbane East is not an easy one but it only takes about 15 minutes even if you have to stop and admire the view as you go up.

Highlights

- Neolithic passage tombs dating to 3,000 BC.
- Wonderful megalithic art.
- Spectacular views of surrounding countryside.
- Monuments rich in story and legends.
- 'The Hags Chair', a gigantic kerbsone with art.



Visitor Experiences

EXPERIENCE	DESCRIPTION	FITNESS LEVEL	MIN/MAX NUMBERS	DURATION (APPROX.)	PRICE PER PERSON
Guided Tour	With our expert guide, hear about the archaeology, mythology and art of these Neolithic monuments.	Good level of fitness required. Sensible footwear needed and a walking stick.	Min. 2 Max. 30	60 minutes (including climb)	Free admission
Self-guided Tour	Explore the monuments and enjoy the views.	Difficult. Good level of fitness required. Sensible footwear needed and a walking stick.	Min. 1 Max. 30	60 minutes	Free admission

On-site Facilities

- Parking.
- Coffee shop.
- Toilets nearby.

Booking Details

T: +353 (0)87 052 4975 **E:** brunaboinne@opw.ie

Languages

Leaflet available in English and Irish €0.50 each.

Parklands/Walks

Rural locations with stunning views. Very steep climb to top of the hill.

Nearby

Oldcastle Town, 6km (10 minute drive)

Fore Abbey, 14km (15 minute drive)

Kells, 19km (20 minute drive)

Cavan County Museum, Ballyjamesduff, 18km (22 minute drive)

Lough Sheelin, 22km (25 minute drive)

Biodiversity

Larks (song bird) can be found on the Hill. Rare orchids are present too.

Sustainability

Wide open spaces with lots of opportunity for exercise and wellbeing.



Opening Hours

May to September

Daily: 10.00 – 18.00

Last tour: 16.30

Last admission: 17.30

Location

Main Street, Maynooth, Co Kildare,
W23 F2D5

One of the most strategic castles in Ireland, dating back to the 13th century.

At the entrance to Maynooth Castle stands the remains of the Inner Gatehouse. Emblazoned on the front of the gatehouse is a coat of arms representing the Fitzgerald and Boyle families, two families synonymous with this site. The Fitzgerald family fell from grace in the 16th century following an unsuccessful rebellion. Maynooth Castle had been badly damaged in a siege in 1535.

While visiting Maynooth Castle you will have the opportunity to visit The Keep which was one of the largest ever constructed in Ireland. At its prime the Keep had four levels, the undercroft, the great hall, the library and the garrison quarters. The Well is built within the safe confines of the Keep walls. Soldiers could access water without having to risk their lives outside of the Keep and the opposing force would struggle to find a way to poison the water supply. The well would have been one of the greatest defensive features within the castle structure.

Take a stroll around the beautiful grounds and see the Silken Thomas Yew Tree. This impressive tree is believed to have been planted in the 13th century and stories that on the night before he surrendered to King Henry V111 'Silken' Thomas Fitzgerald played his flute beneath this tree. Today is it situated prominently on the grounds of St. Patrick's College which is right beside the castle.

Highlights

- Keep Exhibition – a free exhibition on the history of the castle and the Fitzgerald family.
- Silken Thomas Yew Tree in the grounds of the castle.



Visitor Experiences

EXPERIENCE	DESCRIPTION	FITNESS LEVEL	MIN/MAX NUMBERS	DURATION (APPROX.)	PRICE PER PERSON
Guided Tour (Indoors)	Commencing in the Reception area of the site you are led through the castle and exhibition area.	Moderate. Access for wheelchair is restricted to the ground floor. Steps lead to the castle. Uneven terrain, gravel paths.	Min. N/A Max. 25-30	45 minutes	Free admission
Self-guided Tour (Outdoors)	Feel free to walk around the beautiful grounds within the castle complex.	Moderate. Access for wheelchair is restricted to the grounds. Uneven terrain outside, gravel paths.	Min. N/A Max. 20	30 minutes	Free admission

On-site Facilities

- No coach or car parking at this site.
- There are no public toilets at this site.

Booking Details

T: +353 (0)1 628 6744 **E:** maynoothcastle@opw.ie

Nearby

St Patrick's College, Castletown House, Carlton House.

Biodiversity

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Sustainability

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National Botanic Gardens of Ireland Kilmacurragh Co Wicklow



Opening Hours

Year round

Mid-October to mid-March

Daily: 9.30 – 17.00

Late March

Daily: 9.00 – 16.30

Location

Kilbride, Co Wicklow, A67 YR12

An 18th century country estate in the heart of County Wicklow.

The National Botanic Gardens, Kilmacurragh is nestled in County Wicklow, the garden county of Ireland, just an hour's drive from Dublin. It is famous for its towering old rhododendron trees that begin flowering spectacularly in the spring, followed by wonderful wildflower meadows in early summer. The double herbaceous borders originally planted in Victorian times are one of the highlights of the summer season. The gardens at Kilmacurragh were developed during the golden age of plant collecting, a period of great botanical and geographical exploration, with numerous plant species from around the world being introduced to Ireland for the first time.

The different soil and climatic conditions at Kilmacurragh resulted in many of these specimens succeeding here while struggling or in other parts of Ireland. This historical collection has been restored in tandem with new plantings from as far away as Chile, China, Tibet and Tasmania, while also creating a haven for native plants, wildlife and biodiversity.

Highlights

- 180 species and over 300 cultivars of rhododendrons flowering in spring and early summer.
- Wildflower meadows, including an early-spring crocus and bulb lawn. Double-sided herbaceous borders.
- Oak avenue with native understory planting.
- Wonderful walking experience with birdsong, buzzing bees and bountiful blossoms.
- Chilean ravine.
- Giant lilies.



Visitor Experiences

EXPERIENCE	DESCRIPTION	FITNESS LEVEL	MIN/MAX NUMBERS	DURATION (APPROX.)	PRICE PER PERSON
Guided Tour	Guided tours cover the history of the Gardens and House, historical plant collections, present day conservation projects, biodiversity, native and exotic seasonal blooms.	Moderate. Uphill walk on gravel path.	Min. 2 Max. 30	60 minutes	Free admission
Self-guided Tour	Visitors can enjoy a self-guided walk around the park.	Difficult. Uneven surfaces. Grass, and gravel can be slippery when wet.	Min. N/A Max. 30	60 minutes	Free admission

On-site Facilities

- Café.
- Car park and coach parking.
- Picnic area, wheelchair accessible toilets.
- Pet-friendly (dogs allowed on leads).

Booking Details

December to March

T: +353 (0)404 48844 **E:** kilmacurraghgardens@opw.ie

Languages

Children's trails available and map.

Parklands/Walks

N/A

Tea Rooms

Acton's Tea Room (franchisee Brambles), with a seating capacity 35 to 40 people. Bookings **T:** +353 (0)404 48842

Nearby

Avondale Forest Park, 6.5km

Glendalough, 17km

Mountusher Gardens, 15km

Powerscourt House and Gardens, 40km

Biodiversity

Kilmacurragh is famous for its wildflower meadows that host an abundance of native plants. Lots of insects and birds can be observed at close range. The herbaceous borders are constantly humming with the sound of bees as they go about their business collecting nectar.

Sustainability

In line with the OPW's Sustainability Strategy, we aim to reduce energy consumption and Greenhouse Gas Emissions, avoid the generation of waste through life cycle thinking and reuse and recycling, commit to 'green' procurement of goods and services, promote use of public transport, walking and cycling routes to access heritage sites.



Opening Hours

June to mid-September

Daily: 10.00 – 17.00

Last admission 16.15

Location

Tullyallen, Drogheda, Co Louth
A92 K682

10km north-west of Drogheda off
the Drogheda – Collon Road, R168

Once the most powerful and influential monastery in medieval Ireland.

This beautiful site is typical of the Cistercians who chose to build their abbeys as far removed from the temptations of towns as possible. Although the remains of Mellifont are quite fragmentary, the outlines of the church and domestic buildings can be seen. Two buildings remain largely intact today, the 13th century early English Gothic chapter house, and the octagonal Romanesque lavabo. The lavabo is the unique architectural feature of Mellifont, the only one to be built in Ireland. It stood as a medieval washroom and originally contained a fountain used for both physical and spiritual cleansing.

Following the dissolution of the Abbey in 1549, the property eventually passed to the Moore family. In 1603, Hugh O'Neill the Earl of Tyrone, submitted to Lord Deputy Mountjoy here after the Nine Years War. It was this submission and the subsequent signing of the "Treaty of Mellifont" that was to forever change the course of political history in Ireland. During the Battle of the Boyne in 1690, Mellifont was used as the headquarters of King William of Orange.

Highlights

- The lavabo is the unique architectural feature of Mellifont, the only one to be built in Ireland.
- Exhibition in the visitor centre museum of masonry and floor tiles.
- Thirteenth century Chapter House and model of the 13th century Abbey Precinct.
- Universal access to most of the site via pathways and information panels.
- Passport stamping location on the Boyne Valley Camino walk.



Visitor Experiences

EXPERIENCE	DESCRIPTION	FITNESS LEVEL	MIN/MAX NUMBERS	DURATION (APPROX.)	PRICE PER PERSON
Guided Tour	Pre-booked guided tours of the site with our highly praised guides. Includes admission to exhibition.	Moderate. Steps, gravel paths and uneven surfaces.	Min. 10 Max. 40	60 minutes	€5.00 Adult €4.00 Senior/Group €3.00 Student €13.00 Family U12's Free
Self-guided Tour	Visitors can explore the site by themselves using the interpretive panels located at strategic points.	Moderate. Steps, gravel paths and uneven surfaces.	Min. N/A Max. N/A	30 minutes	Free admission

On-site Facilities

- Free car and coach parking.
- Toilets and wheelchair accessible toilets.
- Picnic benches.

Parklands/Walks

Nearby to Boyne Greenway and Townley Hall Woods.

Booking Details

T: +353 (0)41 982 6459 **E:** mellifontabbey@opw.ie

Nearby

Monasterboice Round Tower and High Crosses, 9 km (10 minute drive)

Brú na Bóinne (Newgrange and Knowth), 10km (15 minute drive)

Battle of the Boyne Oldbridge, 7km (10 minute drive)
Drogheda, 10km (12 minute drive)

Townley Hall Woodland Walks, 6km (8 minute drive)

Biodiversity

The name Mellifont means Fountain of Honey. The bees still visit the site to gather pollen. Swallows nest every year in our Chapter House and the Abbey is home to several different types of bat. The river Mattock flows alongside the Abbey.

Sustainability

Old Mellifont Abbey is part of the Boyne Valley Camino walking route. In line with OPW's Sustainability Strategy, we aim to reduce energy consumption and Green House Gas Emissions, avoid the generation waster through life cycle thinking and reuse and recycling, commit to 'Green' procurement of goods and services, promote use of public transport, walking and cycling routes to access heritage sites.



Opening Hours

Closed from December-February

March to October

Daily: 10.00 – 18.00

Last admission 17.15

October to November

Daily: 09.00 – 16.30

Last admission 15.45

Location

Castle Street, Carrick-on-Suir,
Co Tipperary, E21 CX59

In the town of Carrick-on-Suir
on N24, 27km from Waterford

Ireland's finest Tudor Manor House, fit for a Queen.

Ormond Castle is the finest and earliest example of an Elizabethan manor house in Ireland. It was built by Thomas Butler, 10th Earl of Ormond in the 1560s and was integrated into an older medieval castle and two 15th century towers. The state rooms in the manor house contain some of the finest decorative plasterwork in the country, featuring portraits of Queen Elizabeth I, a distant cousin of the Earl Thomas and many other motifs associated with the Tudor dynasty, which provided three kings and two queens of England.

This Renaissance building was unusual in Ireland in what was a period of political upheaval. Its design and interior decoration was influenced by contemporary European trends and showcases the craftsmanship of the period. The elegant interior is bright and spacious, which is markedly different from the earlier, and gloomier medieval sections of the building, now in ruin.

Experience the same feeling of wonderment on entering the stunning Long Gallery as those visiting when it was first built. Marvel at the work of the Elizabethan builders and craftsmen and soak in the atmosphere of this most elegant building.

Highlights

- The 30 metre Tudor Long Gallery.
- Amazing stucco plasterwork and period interiors.
- The attic with its original A frame roof timbers.
- Award winning audio visual available in Irish and English, with subtitles in French, German, Italian, Polish, Spanish, and Chinese
- Model and touch screen exhibition with text in Irish, English, French, German, Italian, Polish, Spanish, and Chinese.



Visitor Experiences

EXPERIENCE	DESCRIPTION	FITNESS LEVEL	MIN/MAX NUMBERS	DURATION (APPROX.)	PRICE PER PERSON
Guided Tour (Indoors)	Pre-booked guided tours of the castle with a trained tour guide.	Moderate. Spiral stairs and further stairs to attic. Not wheelchair accessible	Min. 10 Max. 25	55 minutes	€4.00 Group €3.00 Student
Exhibition	Touch screen displays.	Flat surfaces. Ground floor is wheelchair accessible.	Min. 10 Max. 25	15 minutes	<i>Included in above admission charge.</i>
Audio-visual	Two 7-minute audio-visual presentations.	N/A	Min. N/A Max. 25	15 minutes	<i>Included in above admission charge.</i>

On-site Facilities

- Toilets, wheelchair accessible toilet, baby changing facilities.
- Public car parking in New Street car park – five minutes walk (approx. 90 spaces) €1.20 per hour.
- Public coach parking in New Street car park (1 bus parking bay), (5 minutes walk), €1.20 per hour.

Booking Details

T: +353 (0)51 640 787 (*in season*) **E:** ormondcastle@opw.ie

Languages

Guide books available in English (€15), French, German, Italian and Irish (€4.00).

Leaflets available in English, Irish, French, German, Italian and Spanish (€0.50).

Free returnable laminated tour information available in English, Irish, French, German, Italian and Spanish (€0.50).

The audio-visual (2 x 7-minute) presentations is available in English and Irish with subtitles available in French, German, Italian, Spanish, Polish and Chinese.

Exhibition – The touch screen exhibition information is available in English, Irish, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Polish and Chinese.

Parklands/Walks

Adjacent to the Suir Blueway – river and pathway which caters for cycling, walking and canoeing.

Tea Rooms

No facilities on site but there is a café and hotel within five minutes walk.

Nearby

Curraghmore House, Mount Congreve Gardens, Cahir Castle, Swiss Cottage, Waterford Crystal.

Biodiversity

A pair of ravens nest each year in one of the ruined medieval towers where they produce a brood of young. These are the largest members of the crow family and have a wing span of 1 metre – 1.2 metres.

Sustainability

Located on the Suir Blue Way with canoeing, cycling and walking routes. In line with the OPW's Sustainability Strategy, we aim to reduce energy consumption and Green House Gas Emissions, avoid the generation of waste through life cycle thinking and reuse and recycling, commit to 'Green' procurement of goods and services, promote use of public transport, walking and cycling routes to access heritage sites.



Reginald's Tower and Greyfriars/French Church

Co Waterford



Opening Hours

December to February

Wed-Sun: 9.30 – 17.00

Last admission 16.15

March to October

Daily: 9.30 – 17.30

Last admission 16.30)

November to December

Daily: 9.30 – 17.00

Last admission 16.15

Location

The Quay, Waterford, X91 Y880

The iconic structure in Ireland's oldest city, a tower that has been in continuous use for over 800 years.

Waterford, Ireland's oldest city, has the greatest concentration of urban defensive structures remaining in the country and Reginald's Tower is the jewel in the crown of these. Originally a wooden structure built by the Vikings stood on the site of the current tower but the arrival of the Normans and their capture of the city in August 1170 would lead to change. The Normans, the master castle builders, would replace the wooden defenses used by the Vikings with stone.

The first two floors of the tower, as it stands today, date to this period of refortification in the late 12th century with the upper two floors being added in the late 15th century. Standing alone in the modern day it was originally integrated into the city walls.

Through its lifetime the tower has served many different functions. Primarily built for defense the tower has acted as a mint, an arsenal, a prison, a residence, a museum and today as a National Monument. Described by Thomas Francis Meagher as *"a massive hinge of stone, connecting the two great outspread wings, the Quay and the Mall"* the tower now stands as a living legacy and a direct link to eight centuries of urban development in Ireland.

Highlights

- Original structural features such as the spiral stairs and 15th century garderobe.
- The Viking Treasures of Waterford exhibition including artefacts from the Woodstown Viking Warrior burial.
- The oldest known map of any part of Waterford, dating to the late 16th century.
- A cannonball from Cromwell's unsuccessful siege of Waterford in 1649 is still embedded in the wall.
- An audio-visual detailing over 1,100 years of the site's history.

Reginald's Tower and Greyfriars/French Church

Co Waterford

Visitor Experiences

EXPERIENCE	DESCRIPTION	FITNESS LEVEL	MIN/MAX NUMBERS	DURATION (APPROX.)	PRICE PER PERSON
Guided Tour of Reginald's Tower Visitor Centre. (Indoors)	<p>Pre-booked guided tours with tour guide. Through all four floors of building via the original spiral stairs that the Normans themselves would have used.</p> <p>Artefacts from the time of the Vikings form the centrepiece of the Viking Treasures of Waterford exhibition within the tower and these are highlighted during the tour.</p> <p>Finishes with an audio-visual film, suitable for all ages, in the AV Room on the top floor.</p>	<p>Mild.</p> <p>On flat surfaces. Access to upper floors via a steep spiral stairs*. Wheelchair access to Ground Floor only.</p> <p>(*The stairs are original to the structure and consist of a total of 56 steps forming a steep spiral stairway).</p>	<p>Min. 10</p> <p>Max. 30</p>	<p>45-60 minutes</p>	<p>€4.00 Group</p>
Guided Tour of Greyfriars/French Church	<p>Guided tours of Greyfriars/French Church are facilitated through Reginald's Tower. The tour visits the ruins of a medieval Franciscan Friary founded in 1240 by Sir Hugh Purcell. In the 1690's French Huguenots were granted parts of the building resulting in it becoming known as the French Church.</p>	<p>Moderate.</p> <p>Uneven surfaces.</p>	<p>Min. 1</p> <p>Max. 30</p>	<p>30 minutes</p>	<p>Free admission</p>

On-site Facilities

- Car parking – multiple public car parks within 5 minutes' walk of the tower.
- Coach parking – Bolton Street car park, 3 minutes' walk
- No toilets, no café.

Booking Details

T: +353 (0)51 304220 **E:** reginaldstower@opw.ie

Biodiversity

The OPW Biodiversity Action Strategy 2022-2026 involves implementing biodiversity-friendly management measures at heritage sites, including pollinator-friendly grass management; maintaining diverse wild plant communities; sustainable trees management practices; bat friendly low lighting levels; mechanical weed control allowing minimal use of pesticides, chemicals and fertilizers; planting of native varieties, etc at key locations.

Sustainability

In line with the OPW's Sustainability Strategy, we aim to reduce energy consumption and Greenhouse Gas Emissions, avoid the generation of waste through lifecycle thinking and reusing and recycling, commit to 'green procurement' of goods and services, promote the use of public transport, walking and cycling routes to access heritage sites.



Opening Hours

Mid-March to mid-October

Daily: 9.00 – 17.30

Last admission 16.45

Mid-October to mid-March

Daily: 9.00 – 16.30

Last admission 15.45

Location

St Patrick's Rock of Cashel, Cashel,
Co Tipperary, E25 KX44

Where the stories of Kings and Bishops are revealed.

Perched dramatically on a natural rock outcrop in the famed Golden Vale, visitors will step back in time as they view the spectacular buildings at the Rock of Cashel. These structures are one of the most significant collections of medieval buildings in Ireland.

Visitors will see unique buildings, such as the one-of-a-kind 12th century Cormac's Chapel, one of Ireland's few remaining complete round towers, and one of the finest examples of Gothic architecture in Ireland. Inside the Hall of the Vicar's Choral they can view the original St. Patrick's Cross and many fascinating artefacts associated with the site.

Our expert guides take visitors back through centuries of history, from the kings that used the Rock of Cashel as their seat of power and inauguration place, to the bishops, battles and attacks that happened in this historic place. Visitors to the Rock of Cashel will leave with a lasting impression, and a feeling that they know medieval Ireland a little better.

Highlights

- Guided access to Cormac's Chapel which houses Ireland's only medieval frescos.
- St Patrick's Cathedral built in the 13th century in the Gothic style.
- A 27-metre-high round tower and bishop's residential tower.
- Interesting exhibitions in the Vicar's Choral.
- Stunning panoramic views of the Golden Vale.



Visitor Experiences

EXPERIENCE	DESCRIPTION	FITNESS LEVEL	MIN/MAX NUMBERS	DURATION (APPROX.)	PRICE PER PERSON
Guided Tour	Includes all five buildings of the Rock of Cashel. Visitors will learn about the history, art, architecture, and folklore of the Rock of Cashel with an experienced guide.	Moderate. Steps, gravel, flagstone, grass pathways. Visitors with disabilities can gain access via the gated entrance. Wheelchair ramps on site.	Min. 5 Max. 50	60 minutes	€6.00
Guided Tour of Cormac's Chapel	Special guided tours taking visitors into the recently conserved Cormac's Chapel. Due to the fragile nature of the medieval frescos, Cormac's Chapel is a controlled environment and access is by guided tour only. On these tours visitors will learn about the conservation efforts, as well as about the building's unique nature and history.	Mild difficulty. The doorway into Cormac's Chapel is narrow, but the interior surfaces are even.	Min. 1 Max. 50	20-25 minutes	€3.00 on top of the regular ticket price Tickets for this tour are sold on a first come, first served basis, and cannot be pre-booked.
Self-guided Tour	Visitors have the option to self-guide at the Rock of the Cashel (with the exception of the interior of Cormac's Chapel). Visitors can take their time, enjoy the views, and watch the audio-visual presentation. QR Codes available in different languages.	Moderate. Steps, uneven gravel, flagstone pathways, and grass surfaces. Visitors with disabilities can gain access via the gated entrance. Wheelchair ramps on site.	Min. N/A Max. N/A	No time limit.	€6.00 Group

On-site Facilities

- Car/bus parking located at the base of the hill (approx. 200m from reception). Cost €4.50 per vehicle. Managed by Tipperary County Council.
- There are no on-site cafés or shops. There are also no on-site toilet facilities at the Rock of Cashel, but there are public toilets next to the car park.

Booking Details

T: +353 (0) 62 61437 **E:** rockofcashel@opw.ie

Languages

Leaflets are available to download at www.heritageireland.ie and QR Codes are available on site. There is an audio-visual presentation available in English, Irish, French, German, and Italian.

Parklands/Walks

The buildings at the Rock of Cashel are set within a graveyard which visitors are free to visit.

Tea Rooms

None

Nearby

Cashel Folk Village, approx. 500m
Athassel Priory, Golden, 10km
Holycross Abbey, 13.4km
Cahir Castle, 16.4km
Swiss Cottage, 18.2km

Biodiversity

The Rock of Cashel is home to several species of birds, in particular Jackdaws and Swifts. The *OPW Biodiversity Action Strategy 2022-2026* involves implementing biodiversity-friendly management measures at heritage sites, including pollinator-friendly grass management; maintaining diverse wild plant communities; sustainable trees management practices; bat friendly low lighting levels; mechanical weed control allowing minimal use of pesticides, chemicals and fertilizers; planting of native varieties, etc at key locations.

Sustainability

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Roscrea Castle, Gardens and Damer House/Black Mills

Co Tipperary



Opening Hours

Easter to end of September

Daily: 10.00 – 17.15

Location

Castle Street, Roscrea, Co Tipperary,
E53 F652

A trio of history – Roscrea Castle, Damer House and The Black Mills.

The ecclesiastical settlement at Roscrea was founded by St Cronan about the late 6th century. Roscrea is strategically located in a gap between Slieve Bloom and Devilsbit Mountains and was on one of the great roads of early historic Ireland, the Slighe Dala.

On entering Damer House, the first thing you will see is the magnificent 18th century staircase sweeping into the hall. At the castle you will be given a guided tour about how it all began at this beautiful 12th century Anglo-Norman Castle.

In Damer House you will be taken through the rooms which are furnished with 18th century furniture. You can experience what it was like to live in a house like this 300 years ago.

In the Black Mills, a restored mill situated outside of the complex but just a short stroll, the spectacular 12th century high cross of St Cronan is housed. At the Blackmill you will hear about life in a 7th century monastery and how St Cronan came to set up his monastery on this site.

Highlights

- Twelfth century high cross, the 12th century west church gable and the 9th century round tower.
- The Kelly Collection displays personal items, letters, school books and farming implements from the Kelly family who lived in rural Ireland up until the early 20th century.
- Roscrea Castle features a basement dungeon inside the main door, the spiral staircase leading to the great hall with medieval fireplace and garderobe.

Roscrea Castle, Gardens and Damer House/Black Mills

Co Tipperary

Visitor Experiences

EXPERIENCE	DESCRIPTION	FITNESS LEVEL	MIN/MAX NUMBERS	DURATION (APPROX.)	PRICE PER PERSON
Guide Tour of Roscrea Heritage (Indoors & outdoors)	The guided tour commences in the Reception area of Damer House, then through the site and to various buildings within the complex.	Moderate. Access for wheelchair is restricted to the grounds at Damer House and Roscrea Castle. Lift is available at the Black Mills. Uneven terrain outside through centre on gravel paths.	Min. 15 Max. 20	45 minutes	€5.00 Adult €4.00 Group €3.00 Student €13.00 Family U12's Free
Self-guided Tour (Outdoors)	Beautiful walled garden within the complex walls also available just to sit and enjoy the peace and serenity. These gardens are free to visit and garden benches available just to enjoy a coffee.	Moderate. Access for wheelchair is restricted to the Black Mills where a lift is available. Uneven terrain outside through centre on gravel paths.	Min. N/A Max. N/A	30-60 minutes	€5.00 Adult €4.00 Group €3.00 Student €13.00 Family U12's Free

On-site Facilities

- Paid car parking along the street outside site.
- Paid coach parking (for one coach) – outside site.
- There are public toilets in Damer House.

Booking Details

T: +353 (0)505 21850 **E:** roscreaheritage@opw.ie

Languages

N/A

Parklands/Walks

N/A

Tea Rooms

None

Nearby

Portumna Castle and Gardens, Heywood Gardens, Holy Cross Abbey.

Biodiversity

The *OPW Biodiversity Action Strategy 2022-2026*, involves implementing biodiversity-friendly management measures at heritage sites, including pollinator-friendly grass management; maintaining diverse wild plant communities; sustainable trees management practices; bat friendly low lighting levels; mechanical weed control allowing minimal use of pesticides, chemicals and fertilizers; planting of native varieties, etc., at key locations.

Sustainability

In line with the OPW's Sustainability Strategy, we aim to reduce energy consumption and Greenhouse Gas Emissions, avoid the generation of waste through life cycle thinking and reuse and recycling, commit to 'green' procurement of goods and services, promote use of public transport, walking and cycling routes to access heritage sites.



Opening Hours

May to August

Wed-Sun: 10.00 – 17.30

Last admission 45 min before closing.

Location

Gowran, Co Kilkenny, R95 CV0Y

In the centre of Gowran town. Follow the R448 from Carlow south towards Thomastown

Knights, Ladies, Saints and Sinners.

St Mary's Church was built in the late thirteenth century as a collegiate church and was served by a college - clerics who lived in a community but did not submit to the rule of a monastery.

The church was patronised by the powerful Butler family of Kilkenny Castle and many early family members are commemorated here with elaborate medieval tombs. The impressive ruins were decorated by the Gowran Master whose stone carvings are immortalised in the poetry of Nobel Laureate Séamus Heaney.

The once medieval church was later partly reconstructed in the early 19th century and functioned as a Church of Ireland church and adding to its already impressive collection of memorials two stained glass windows created by the prestigious cooperative studio An Túr Gloinne (The Glass Tower) one commemorating Aubrey Cecil White who died the 1st day of the Battle of the Somme WWI. The church was gifted to the state as a National Monument in 1970's.

Highlights

- Ogham stone dating to the 4th/5th century.
- O'Tunney tombs - from the hands of a master mason.
- An Túr Gloinne stained glass windows.
- Butler family knights effigies.
- Cadaver tomb.



Visitor Experiences

EXPERIENCE	DESCRIPTION	FITNESS LEVEL	MIN/MAX NUMBERS	DURATION (APPROX.)	PRICE PER PERSON
Guided Tour	All guided tours of the St Mary's Church are with a trained tour guide. Enjoy a guided tour of these impressive ruins dating from the 13th century. The church is partially restored so visitors can enjoy wandering through the wonderful collection of monuments dating from the 5th to the 20th centuries.	Gravel pathways. Mostly wheelchair accessible.	Min. 10 Max. 50	45 minutes	Free admission

On-site Facilities

- Toilet, no wheelchair accessible toilet.
- Free parking nearby.

Booking Details

T: +353 (0)56 772 6894 **E:** stmaryschurch@opw.ie

Out of season contact information:

T: +353 (0)56 772 4623 **E:** breda.lynch@opw.ie

Languages

Booklet available in English, French, German, Irish and Italian (€4.00). Leaflet available in English and Irish (€0.50).

Tea Rooms

None

Nearby

Jerpont Abbey, Kilkenny Castle, Dunmore Cave.

Biodiversity

The OPW *Biodiversity Action Strategy 2022-2026*, involves implementing biodiversity-friendly management measures at heritage sites, including pollinator-friendly grass management; maintaining diverse wild plant communities; sustainable trees management practices; bat friendly low lighting levels; mechanical weed control allowing minimal use of pesticides, chemicals and fertilizers; planting of native varieties, etc., at key locations.

Sustainability

In line with the OPW's Sustainability Strategy, we aim to reduce energy consumption and Greenhouse Gas Emissions, avoid the generation of waste through life cycle thinking and reuse and recycling, commit to 'green' procurement of goods and services, promote use of public transport, walking and cycling routes to access heritage sites.



Opening Hours

Mid-March to late October

Daily: 10.00 – 18.00

Last admission 17.15

October to November

Daily: 9.30 – 16.30

Last admission 15.45

Location

Ardfinnan Road, Cahir, Co Tipperary,
E21 DX07

Junction 10 (4km) M8 Motorway
(Dublin – Cork) and Junction 11
(6km) M8 (Cork – Dublin)

Access from Cahir town centre
via the R670 Ardfinnan road only

No access from the R668
Clogheen Road

One of the finest cottage ornés – an idyllic fantasy of country life.

The Swiss Cottage was built in 1810 by Richard Butler, 1st Earl of Glengall and his wife Emily, a high society couple and members of the Prince Regent's set in London. It is almost certain that they engaged the foremost architect of the day, John Nash, to design a cottage orné to reflect the characteristics of the in vogue Picturesque Movement. This movement was characterized by a preoccupation with the combined pictorial values of architecture and landscape.

Situated within their private demesne in idyllic, picturesque and wooded surroundings overlooking the River Suir, the cottage with its enveloping thatched roof, rustic rose and wisteria clad exterior and sumptuously decorated interiors is a feast for the eye. The cottage's rooms are decorated in fashionable toile wall coverings (cloth on paper backing), panoramic Dufour wallpaper made in Paris and elegant period furniture.

Drink in the peaceful atmosphere, smell the fragrant roses in the gentle warm air of a summer's day and imagine the Earl and Countess holding fishing and hunting parties and summer soirées with close friends. This was the ultimate short term peaceful retreat, which allowed the couple to leave behind the hustle and bustle of their nearby main residence, Cahir House, even if only for a few hours.

Highlights

- Period furniture and interiors featuring original Dufour wallpaper.
- Rose and wisteria clad exterior in early summer.
- Adjacent to historic 19th century wooded landscape. Inspired by nature, the rose and wisteria clad Swiss Cottage is a harmonious but seemingly random assembly of crooked walls, odd angles, doors and windows of varying shapes and sizes. The house is cleverly designed, however, to give the impression that it evolved over many years to merge with its surroundings.
- Located on the Suir Blue Way – used for walking, cycling and canoeing.



Visitor Experiences

EXPERIENCE	DESCRIPTION	FITNESS LEVEL	MIN/MAX NUMBERS	DURATION (APPROX.)	PRICE PER PERSON
Guided Tour (Indoors)	<p>Guided tours of Swiss Cottage with trained tour guide.</p> <p>Access by guided tour only.</p> <p>Pre-booking required for all groups.</p>	<p>Moderate.</p> <p>External and internal stairs.</p> <p>Wheelchair accessible – first floor only.</p> <p>Two car spaces adjacent to site.</p>	<p>Min. 10</p> <p>Max. 15</p>	<p>30-40 minutes</p>	<p>€4.00 Group</p>

On-site Facilities

- Car park (3 minute walk).
- Coach park (3 minute walk) 2 spaces.
- Toilets, wheelchair accessible toilets.
- Baby changing facilities.

Booking Details

T: +353 (0)46 940 7005 (*during season only*)

E: swisscottage@opw.ie

Languages

Booklet available in English, French, German, Irish and Italian (€4.00). Leaflet available in English and Irish (€0.50).

Parklands/Walks

On to the Suir Blueway – canoing, cycling and riverside walk.

Nearby

Cahir Castle, Ormond Castle and Rock of Cashel.

Biodiversity

Located in Cahir Park, the old walled private demesne of the Butlers of Cahir, which lies within the Lower River Suir SAC (Special Area of Conservation).

The woodlands was planted over one hundred years ago and it contains a large component of exotic tree species. Two stands of Yew (*Taxus baccata*) woods, are a rare habitat in Ireland. Cahir native species which occur include Yew, Ash, Pedunculate Oak, Hazel and Spindle (*Euonymus europaeus*). Future prospects for the Yew woods are good as the sites are proposed for restoration under a Coillte EU LIFE programme.

The area is rich in wildlife and the following can be seen regularly near the cottage: otter, grey squirrels, mute swans, mallard ducks, grey heron, barn owls, buzzards and sparrowhawks. The River Suir is also renowned for its stocks of brown trout and salmon.

Sustainability

Located on the Suir Blueway – used for walking, cycling and canoing. In line with the OPW's Sustainability Strategy, we aim to reduce energy consumption and Greenhouse Gas Emissions, avoid the generation of waste through life cycle thinking and reuse and recycling, commit to 'green' procurement of goods and services, promote use of public transport, walking and cycling routes to access heritage sites.



Opening Hours

March to May and Sept to Nov

Daily: 10.00 – 17.00

Last admission 16.15

June to August

Daily: 10.00 – 17.30

Last admission 16.45

**Site will close for the season on
5th November, last admission
on this day will be 13.30**

Location

Saltmills, New Ross, Co Wexford,
Y34 KR64

Located on the Hook Peninsula,
16km south of New Ross off
the R734 road or 29km from
Wexford off the Wexford to
Ballyhack road R733

Founded by The Greatest Knight for Cistercian monks, a place where monks toiled and legacies were created.

Tintern Abbey was founded for the Cistercian monks by William Marshal, known as 'The Greatest Knight'. William served five English kings and was instrumental in the issuing of the Magna Carta or Charter of Rights which still stands as an important symbol of liberty today.

Through his marriage to the Irish Princess Isabella de Clare William inherited vast amounts of land including the site where Tintern stands today.

Take time to hear about the Cistercian monks, residents of the abbey for 250 years. Wander through the remains of the 13th century monastery and hear about how, through their hard work and dedication, the monastery flourished until it was closed by King Henry VIII in 1536.

Next hear about the escapades of the Colclough family who called Tintern home for the next four centuries. View portraits of some members of the Colclough family and hear about crushing court-cases, hidden wills, rebellion, murder and benevolent landlords. From the Colclough Library the visitor has a wonderful view across Bannow Bay.

Avail of the joint ticket offer and visit the Colclough Walled Garden, a restored Victorian garden situated within the woodland. Enjoy freshly baked cakes in the Tintern Abbey Tea Room and enjoy a walk along the Tintern Trails.

Highlights

- Events calendar: lectures, walks, talks, family events, children's workshops, music events.
- Exhibition telling of the Colclough family located in the beautiful Colclough room.
- Combined ticket gives access to the Abbey and the restored Victorian Walled Garden.
- Set in a Special Area of Conservation this unspoilt woodland landscape is a haven for wildlife and flora and fauna.
- Beautiful walking trails of varying lengths within a historic landscape – garden and river walks.

Visitor Experiences

EXPERIENCE	DESCRIPTION	FITNESS LEVEL	MIN/MAX NUMBERS	DURATION (APPROX.)	PRICE PER PERSON
Guide Tour (Indoors)	Pre-booked guided tours of Tintern Abbey with trained tour guide.	Mild. Stairs and some uneven surfaces. Partially wheelchair accessible.	Min. 10 Max. 50	45 minutes	€5.00 Adult €4.00 Senior/Group €3.00 Child/Student €13.00 Family U12's Free
Self-guided Tour (Indoors)	Military and Social Living History display representing the 12th-20th centuries.	Mild. Access by stairs.	Min. 1 Max. 50	20 minutes	As part of charges above

On-site Facilities

- Car parking.
- Coach parking.
- On-site Tea Room in restored coach house.
- Toilets, wheelchair accessible toilets.

Booking Details

T: +353 (0)51 562650 **E:** tinternabbey@opw.ie

Combined ticket includes access to Colclough Walled Garden – a 2.5 acre restored Victorian Walled Garden built by the Colclough family in the early 19th century.

E: colcloughwalledgarden@gmail.com

Parklands/Walks

Self-guiding walks through the forestry and Special Area of Conservation, includes garden and river walks.

Tea Rooms

Outdoor tea/coffee facilities available in the woodlands.

Biodiversity

At Tintern Abbey, conservation works have included special measures to protect the local bat colonies. The abbey is set in a special area of conservation and is surrounded by woodland within which are walking trails.

Sustainability

In line with the OPW's Sustainability Strategy, we aim to reduce energy consumption and Greenhouse Gas Emissions, avoid the generation of waste through life cycle thinking and reuse and recycling, commit to 'green' procurement of goods and services, promote use of public transport, walking and cycling routes to access heritage sites.



Opening Hours

Closed from November to February

March to September

Daily: 9.00 – 17.00

Last admission 16.15

Location

The Main Guard, Sarsfield Street,
Clonmel, Co Tipperary, E91 P7Y8

One of Ireland's oldest civic building and a rare example of classical style public architecture in Ireland.

In the 17th century County Tipperary was a palatinate, ruled by James Butler, Duke of Ormond. When the Duke decided he needed a new courthouse, he built one in the heart of Clonmel. Later, when it was used as a barracks, it became known as the Main Guard.

A fine two-storey symmetrical building, some elements of its design were based on works by the famous Sir Christopher Wren.

In the 18th century it was the venue for the Clonmel Assizes. The most notable trial it witnessed was that of Father Nicholas Sheehy, the anti-Penal Laws agitator. Sheehy was hanged, drawn and quartered.

In about 1810, the ground floor was converted into shops, but the building has recently undergone an award-winning restoration. The open arcade of sandstone columns is once again an attractive feature of the streetscape, while inside you will find a fantastic exhibition and event space.

Highlights

- Historic town building used as courthouse, barracks and markets.
- Full guided tours.
- Exhibitions throughout the year.

Visitor Experiences

EXPERIENCE	DESCRIPTION	FITNESS LEVEL	MIN/MAX NUMBERS	DURATION (APPROX.)	PRICE PER PERSON
Guided Tour	Our tour guides are passionate about this building and would be happy to talk you through the site's rich history.	Moderate. Steps to different levels. Lift available.	Min. 2 Max. 50	35–40 minutes	Free admission
Self-guided Tour	Visitors have the option to self-guide at The Main Guard with information panels and exhibitions on display.	Moderate. There are several steps into the main chamber area. Visitors with difficulty and disabilities can gain access via the lift.	Min. N/A Max. 50	30 minutes	Free admission

On-site Facilities

Street parking available and car parks nearby, managed by Tipperary County Council.

There are no cafés or shops on site. There are on-site toilet facilities at The Main Guard.

Booking Details

T: +353 (0)52 612 7484 **E:** mainguard@opw.ie

Languages

Leaflets available in English.

Parklands/Walks

None

Tea Rooms

None

Nearby

Swiss Cottage, 15.1km

Cahir Castle, 15.5km

Ormond Castle, 20km

Biodiversity

The OPW *Biodiversity Action Strategy 2022-2026*, involves implementing biodiversity-friendly management measures at heritage sites, including pollinator-friendly grass management; maintaining diverse wild plant communities; sustainable trees management practices; bat friendly low lighting levels; mechanical weed control allowing minimal use of pesticides, chemicals and fertilizers; planting of native varieties, etc., at key locations.

Sustainability

Clonmel is served by local and national bus services. Blueway Cycle Route from Clonmel to Carrick-on-Suir. In line with the OPW's Sustainability Strategy, we aim to reduce energy consumption and Greenhouse Gas Emissions, avoid the generation of waste through life cycle thinking and reuse and recycling, commit to 'green' procurement of goods and services, promote use of public transport, walking and cycling routes to access heritage sites.



Opening Hours

November to February

Weekends only: 9.00 – 16.00

Mid-February to beginning
of November

Daily: 10.00 – 17.00

Location

Castle Street, Trim, Co Meath,
C15 HN90

The ultimate symbol of Norman glory.

Trim Castle is the most spectacular evidence of late 12th and early 13th century Anglo-Norman power in Ireland. The guided tour of the Keep includes the history of the Norman conquest of Ireland, the story of the de Lacy family in Ireland, the construction of the castle and the wider history of the beautiful heritage town of Trim. Most of the rooms remain unchanged since their original design and many have some original features still intact. As you walk through these atmospheric chambers, you can imagine the reality of living in a medieval castle.

The grounds at Trim Castle cover 1.5 hectares. Follow the gently undulating pathway that leads you around the main monuments within the great curtain wall. Information panels are placed to show you the buildings in their original form and to make sure you have all the information you could possibly want, with historical timelines of all the different structures.

This is a self-guided option, so take your time. At your leisure, absorb the sight of the great stone keep built by Hugh de Lacy and his son Walter, the most spectacular evidence of late twelfth- and early thirteenth-century Anglo-Norman power in Ireland.

Highlights

- 3D models showing the various stages of construction of the Keep in fascinating detail
- A climb to the top of the Tower to enjoy stunning views of Trim Heritage town and surrounding countryside.
- A visit to the private Chapel with its remarkable piscina.
- Stories of famous individuals such as Queen Isabella, Richard Duke of York, Prince Hal and the Duke of Wellington and renowned families and dynasties such as the DeLacy's and the Mortimers whose history is interwoven with that of Trim Castle.

Visitor Experiences

EXPERIENCE	DESCRIPTION	FITNESS LEVEL	MIN/MAX NUMBERS	DURATION (APPROX.)	PRICE PER PERSON
Guided Tour of the Keep	A tour of the mighty Keep with one of our knowledgeable and well informed guides.	Medium. Steep and uneven steps. Low doorways. Not suitable for anyone with a fear of heights or vertigo	Min. 2 Max. 25	60 minutes	€4.00 Group
Grounds only	The grounds at Trim Castle cover a stunning 1.5 hectares. Undulating gravel pathways, Information panels in various locations.	Low. Gravel paths.	Min. N/A Max. N/A	60 minutes	Free admission

On-site Facilities

Toilets, including baby changing facilities.

Booking Details

T: +353 (0)46 943 8619 **E:** trimcastle@opw.ie

Languages

Leaflets available in English, Irish, German and French
€0.50c each.

Parklands/Walks

Town centre location, near riverside walks known as The Porch Fields.

Nearby

Located in heritage town of Trim
Bective Abbey, 8km (10 min drive)
Hill of Tara, 16km (20 minute drive)
Loughcrew, 36km (40 minute drive)
Athboy, 13km (15 minute drive)

Biodiversity

Riverside walks along the river Boyne where lots of wildlife and plants can be enjoyed. The *OPW Biodiversity Action Strategy 2022-2026* involves implementing biodiversity-friendly management measures at heritage sites, including pollinator-friendly grass management; maintaining diverse wild plant communities; sustainable trees management practices; bat friendly low lighting levels; mechanical weed control allowing minimal use of pesticides, chemicals and fertilizers; planting of native varieties, etc at key locations.

Sustainability

Walking and cycling routes located nearby. Located on national and local bus routes. Bus stop at entrance gates. In line with the OPW's Sustainability Strategy, we aim to reduce energy consumption and Greenhouse Gas Emissions, avoid the generation of waste through lifecycle thinking and reusing and recycling, commit to 'green procurement' of goods and services, promote the use of public transport, walking and cycling routes to access heritage sites.