



Heritage Sites of Ireland Trade Catalogue

2026

Wild Atlantic Way



OPW

Oidhreacht Éireann
Heritage Ireland

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 entralls 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
- Coach parking at many of our sites
- 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

*2024-2027 rates will be made available on heritageireland.ie.
Children under 12 visit free but must be accompanied by an adult.

**2026 opening dates are listed as of March 2026, please check directly with site for exact opening dates.

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

View itinerary options here: <https://heritageireland.ie/itineraries/>

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: touopsaccounts@opw.ie
- Join our mailing list for more information on www.heritageireland.ie



OPW

Oidhreacht Éireann
Heritage Ireland

Heritage Services

Ireland's Iconic Heritage Sites



Ireland's Hidden
HEARTLANDS



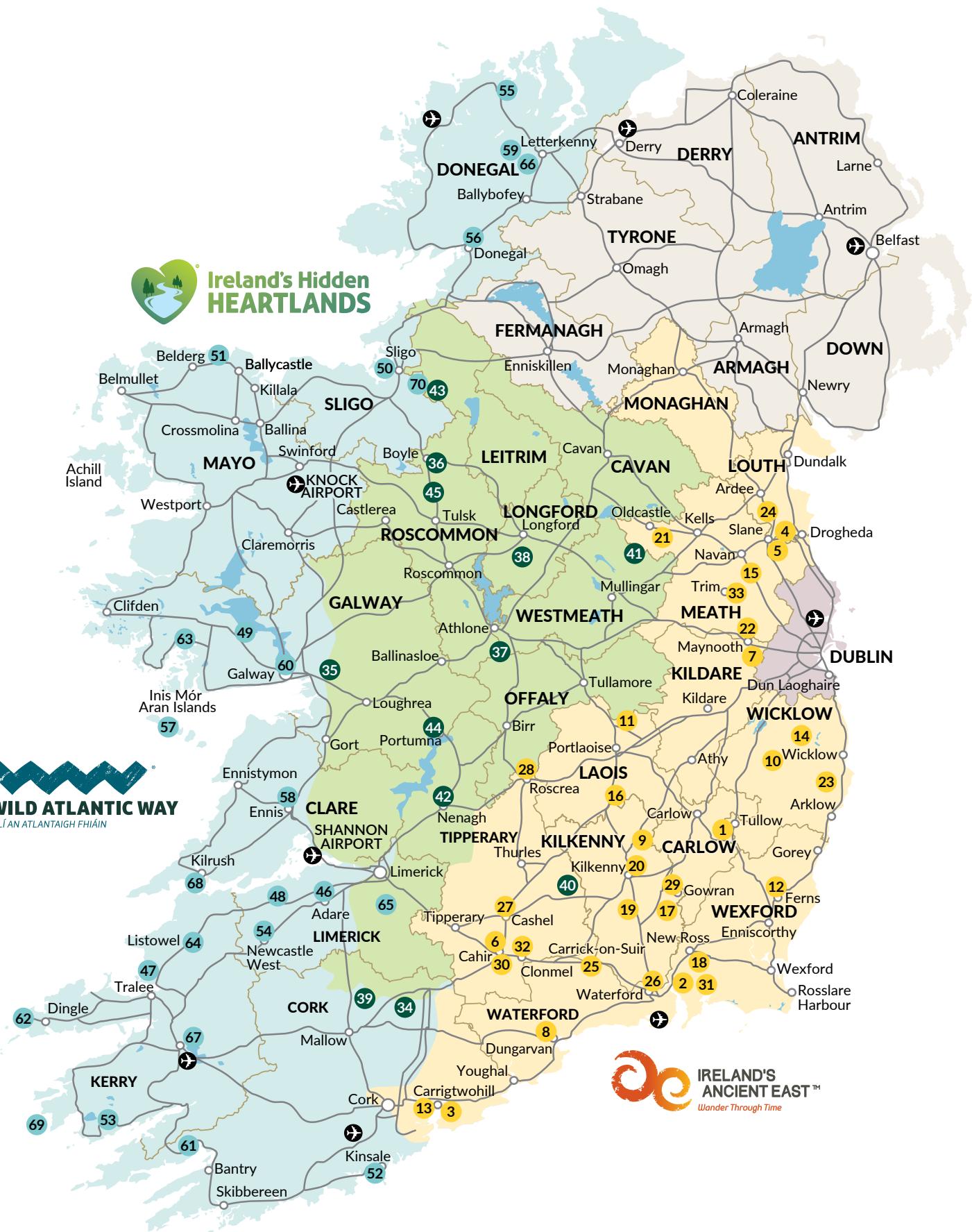
WILD ATLANTIC WAY

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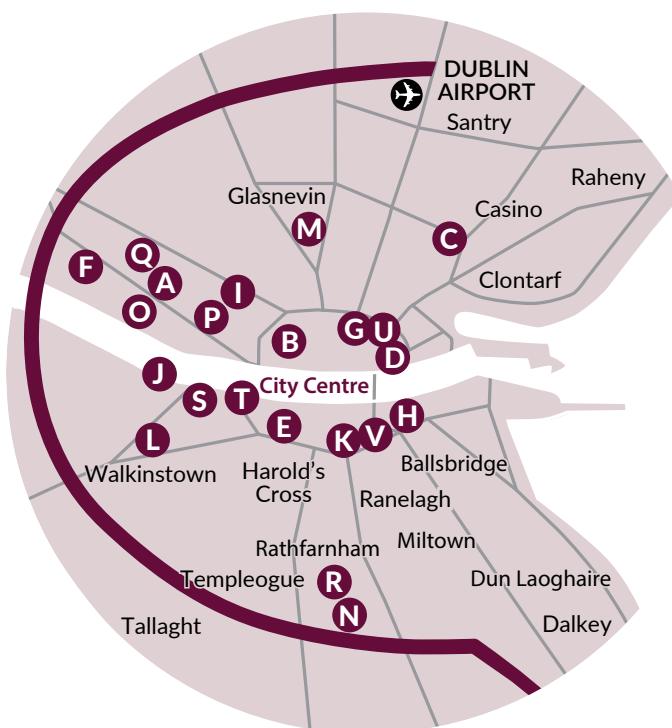
IRELAND'S
ANCIENT EAST™

Wander Through Time



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

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

Ireland's Ancient East

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

Wild Atlantic Way

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



Opening Hours

March to September

Daily: 10.00 – 17.15

Location

Ardfert, Tralee, Co Kerry,
V92 KR7P

Located 10km from Tralee on R551
(Tralee to Ballyheigue Road)

A trio of medieval churches founded by St Brendan 'The Navigator'.

For anyone with a passion for architecture Ardfert Cathedral will be a delight. St Brendan 'The Navigator' was born in the Ardfert area in the 6th century. He founded the monastery not long before embarking on his legendary voyage. He was the subject of a medieval 'Life of St Brendan' and the text known as *Navigatio Brendani*. It was his cult which inspired the three medieval churches that stand on site today.

The earliest building is the cathedral, begun in the 12th century incorporating part of an earlier 11th century church. It boasts some of the tallest 13th century windows in Ireland and a spectacular row of nine lancet windows in the south wall. It is famed for its magnificent Romanesque West Door. The transept houses a selection of carved stone and interpretation relating to the development of the site from the Early Christian period to more recent archaeological excavations.

Highlights

- Romanesque West Door with blind arcading similar to that found at Cormac's Chapel on the Rock of Cashel.
- Temple-na-Hoe – a small masterpiece of Romanesque architecture.
- Romanesque carvings – petalled flowers, geometric design and decorative bosses.
- Carved Ogham stone found locally is displayed in transept.
- Effigies of two medieval bishops or abbots and selection of early Christian grave slabs, baptismal font and decorated corbel displayed in transept.

Visitor Experiences

EXPERIENCE	DESCRIPTION	FITNESS LEVEL	MIN/MAX NUMBERS	DURATION (APPROX.)	PRICE PER PERSON
Guided Tour	Pre-booked guided tour. Commencing at the display model of the site as it existed in the middle ages you are led through the site and the various phases of construction and architectural features are included along with historical references to the growth of Ardfert as a medieval corporation and diocese.	Moderate. Access for wheelchair is restricted to Transept and main body of Cathedral. Uneven terrain, gravel paths.	Min. 10 Max. 45	45 minutes	€5.00 Adult €4.00 Group €3.00 Student €13.00 Family U12's Free
Self-guided Tour	Self-guided tour of the cathedral. Our guides can give a brief introduction to set you on your way. Commencing at the display model you get an overview of the medieval complex.	Moderate. Access for wheelchair is restricted to Transept and main body of Cathedral. Uneven terrain 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

- Free public car parking along the roadside outside building (anywhere between 3-50m).
- Free public coach parking for one coach – 25m distance from entrance.
- Please note: There are no toilets on-site but public toilets are located in the Green opposite the Cathedral – 40m distance from site.

Booking Details

T:+353 (0)66 713 4711 E: ardfertcathedral@opw.ie

Languages

Leaflets are available in German, French and Italian €0.50.

Nearby

Listowel Castle, Listowel, 30km
Kerry County Museum, Tralee, 10km
Tralee Bay Wetland's Centre, Tralee, 11km
Tarbert Bridewell, Tarbert, 47km
Crag Cave, Castleisland, 32km

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

Ardfert is located on the Fenit Loop Cyling Route. In line with 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

February to October

Daily: 09.30 – 18.00

Last admission at 17:15

October to November

Daily: 09.30 – 17.00

Last admission at 16.15

November

Daily: 09.30 – 16.00

Last admission at 15.15

Location

Aughnanure, Oughterard,
Co Galway, H91 PX20

Off the N59 main Galway
to Clifden route

5km south of the village
of Oughterard

A historical gem in the heart of Connemara.

Connemara's best preserved late-medieval tower house, Aughanure Castle is beautifully positioned on a rocky outcrop overhanging the Drimneen River, close to the western shores of Lough Corrib. Built in the fifteenth century, the castle served as the stronghold of the O'Flaherty Gaelic lords of larchonnacht (West Connacht) for over two centuries. Constructed in at least two phases, Aughanure consists of the earlier fifteenth century tower house and surrounding inner bawn, along with the later sixteenth century outer bawn, banqueting hall and other buildings. The O'Flahertys took every advantage of their castle's geographical position close to the lake and in the seventeenth century, this allowed the castle to play an important role resisting the Cromwellian blockade of Galway. However, the O'Flahertys' role in the Rebellion of 1641 resulted in the confiscation of their lands and their rule of larchonnacht came to an abrupt end. Aughanure subsequently fell in and out of O'Flaherty hands on many occasions throughout the following centuries and ultimately, fell to Peadar O'Flaherty who gifted Aughanure to the State in 1952. A restoration and conservation programme followed in the 1960s with the site opening to the public in 1974.

The legacy of this powerful family is deeply entwined with that of the towerhouse at Aughanure which provides the backdrop through which the story of Gaelic medieval Ireland is told on a fully-guided tour of all four floors of the castle, its gatehouse, bawn walls, towers and banqueting hall. Alternatively, self-guiding is facilitated through several informative and colourful information panels throughout the site that allow the visitor to explore at their own pace.

Highlights

- Deadly Defences: Explore all four floors of this tower house with its endless array of deadly defences and curiosities, offering a unique insight into the workings of a Gaelic castle.
- Elaborate sixteenth century banqueting hall carvings
- River Walk: Take a scenic stroll along the leafy banks of the Drimneen River under a canopy of ash, hazel and hawthorn, as you make your way towards the castle gatehouse.

Visitor Experiences

EXPERIENCE	DESCRIPTION	FITNESS LEVEL	MIN/MAX NUMBERS	DURATION (APPROX.)	PRICE PER PERSON
Guided Tour of Castle (Indoors & Outdoors)	Fully guided tours of all four floors of the castle, its flanking towers, walls gatehouse and remains of the banqueting hall. Let our expert guides walk you through the Gaelic medieval period and discover the O'Flaherty's journey as they transformed from kings to warrior lords during a time of profound change in Ireland. The tour ends by walking back through the gatehouse, over the bridge and along the beautiful banks of the Drimneen river.	Mild. Wheelchair access on the ground floor only. Uneven surfaces on pathways and around the grounds.	Min. 2 Max. 30	45 minutes	€5.00 Adult €4.00 Senior/Group €3.00 Student/Child €13.00 Family U12's Free
Self-guiding Tour	Information panels inside the castle that will guide you through the building at your own pace. These panels tell the story of Aughanure, the O'Flahertys and Gaelic medieval Ireland and can be accompanied by visitor's guides in several languages, available for sale at reception. Paths around the site facilitate visitors with reduced mobility and guides are always on hand to answer any questions. Visitor Guides in various languages €0.50c each	Mild. Wheelchair access on the ground floor only. Uneven surface in the banqueting hall remains.	Min. N/A Max. N/A	At your leisure	€5.00 Adult €4.00 Senior/Group €3.00 Student/Child €13.00 Family U12's Free

On-site Facilities

- Free car and mini bus parking max 20 spaces – approx 150m from reception.
- Toilets.

Booking Details

T: +353 (0)91 552 214 E: aughnanurecastle@opw.ie

Languages

Visitor guides available in Irish, English, French, German, Italian, Spanish and Polish - €0.50 each.

Nearby

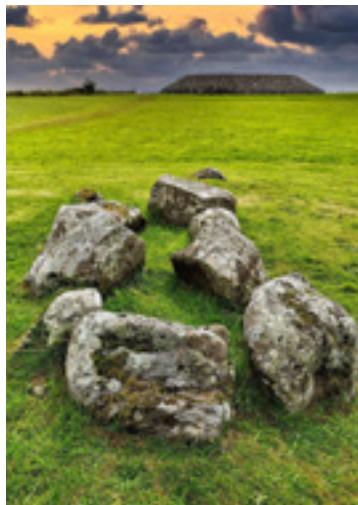
Oughterard town, Oughterard Golf Club, Lough Corrib, St Brigid's Gardens, Glengowla Mines, Wildlands, Moycullen.

Biodiversity

The Drimneen River runs along the path to the castle and acts as a natural barrier. It is a perfect habitat for nature in the wild. 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 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 November

Daily: 10.00 – 17.00

Location

Carrowmore, Sligo, F91 E638

Located 4km from Sligo town,
follow R292 to Strandhill

Ireland's largest cemetery of megalithic monuments.

Carrowmore Megalithic Cemetery is the oldest and the densest concentration of Neolithic monuments in Ireland. It stands in the centre of what has been described as a ritual or sacred landscape and was the focal point for Neolithic religious and ceremonial activity for many centuries. These are among the reasons the site has been placed on Ireland's Tentative List of World Heritage Sites, together with the other monuments that comprise 'The Passage Tomb Landscape of County Sligo'.

Remains of over 30 passage tombs are found here, constructed almost 6,000 years ago. The central and largest monument, Listoghil, appears as a smaller version of Maeve's Cairn and inside a rectangular chamber is roofed by a single massive flat stone. If you are very lucky you may be able to see enigmatic carvings on the front of this capstone that are only visible in rare light conditions.

The newly renovated visitor centre has all new exciting exhibitions that highlight the significance of Carrowmore in the European Neolithic context.

Highlights

- All new exhibitions will inspire your tour through the Neolithic landscape.
- Find out the very latest research on our Neolithic ancestors on a guided tour.
- Admire the skill of those who built these impressive monuments using Stone Age technology.
- See if you can spot the elusive carvings on the capstone of Listoghil.
- Hear the myths and legends of Queen Maeve and the fearsome Cailleach Bhéara.
- Savour the surroundings and get a feel why this was such a sacred place thousands of years ago.

Visitor Experiences

EXPERIENCE	DESCRIPTION	FITNESS LEVEL	MIN/MAX NUMBERS	DURATION (APPROX.)	PRICE PER PERSON
Guided Walking Tour (Outdoors)	The guide will tell the story behind these ancient monuments, reveal the results of the excavations and bring you up to date on the very latest research that is constantly adding to our knowledge of our Neolithic ancestors. Guided tour is outdoors.	Mild. Site is uneven grassland that can be slippery when wet. Wear appropriate footwear for grass paths.	Min. N/A Max. 50	60 minutes	(Included in admission) €4.00 Group Booking essential
Indoor exhibitions	The Visitor Centre and exhibitions are being renovated but no timescale for finishing is available.	N/A	N/A	N/A	(Included in admission) €4.00 Group

On-site Facilities

- Car parking located beside the entrance to the site. Free to use.
- Coach parking 50m walk from entrance to the site. Free to use but must be booked in advance.
- Toilets, wheelchair accessible toilet.

Booking Details

T: +353 (0)71 916 1534 **E:** carrowmoretomb@opw.ie

Languages

Self-guide leaflets available in English, Irish, French, German, Spanish, Italian, Chinese, Greek, Danish, Dutch, Japanese, Polish, Hungarian, Czech, Basque, Catalan, Portuguese, Russian, Finnish, Swedish, Norwegian.

Parklands/Walks

N/A

Tea Rooms

None on site.

Nearby

Sligo Abbey, Drumcliffe, Parke's Castle, Creevykeel Court tomb.

Biodiversity

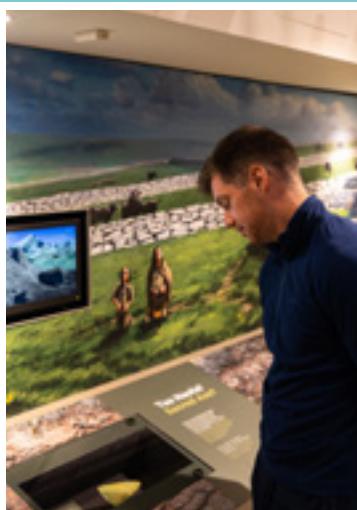
The meadows on site are mown late to encourage species diversity. The OPW Biodiversity Action Strategy 2022-2026, involves implementing biodiversity-friendly management measures at heritage sites, including pollinator-friendly grass management; maintaining diverse wild plant communities; sustainable 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 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. Carrowmore is served by a regular public bus service from Sligo Town.

Céide Fields Neolithic Site and Visitor Centre

Co Mayo



Opening Hours

March to May

Daily: 10.00 – 17.00

June to September

Daily: 10.00 – 18.00

October to November

Daily: 10.00 – 17.00

Available for bookings in winter season.

Location

Glenulra, Ballycastle, Ballina,
Co Mayo, F26PF66

On R314, 8km west of Ballycastle,
on Wild Atlantic Way

14km from Downpatrick Head

Beneath the wild boglands of north Mayo lies Stone Age farmed countryside that gives a unique insight into the sophistication of early farming nearly 6,000 years ago.

The stone-walled fields, extending over hundreds of hectares, are the oldest known globally. Visitors can see the exposed field walls and dwelling enclosure on the neolithic surface and learn how these walls hidden under up to 4m of bog were located using a centuries old technique. They can also experience the natural blanket bog with its own unique vegetation and wildlife.

An all new state of the art immersive visitor experience brings the unique story of our farming ancestors to life using the latest techniques and research.

The award-winning visitor centre is set against some of the most dramatic Wild Atlantic Way coastline. A viewing platform on the edge of the 110-metre-high cliff will help you make the most of the breathtaking scenery.

Highlights

- Hear about the oldest known fossilised farmland and the latest discoveries on a guided tour.
- Admire the ever changing wild Atlantic from our glass rooftop whatever the weather.
- Test your head for heights on our 110m high cliff edge platform.
- Amazing pine tree that grew on the bog 4,300 years ago.
- See if you can spot hares, frogs and the elusive lizard in the natural bog vegetation.
- Immersive video and interactive exhibits will entertain all ages.

Céide Fields Neolithic Site and Visitor Centre

Co Mayo

Visitor Experiences

EXPERIENCE	DESCRIPTION	FITNESS LEVEL	MIN/MAX NUMBERS	DURATION (APPROX.)	PRICE PER PERSON
Guided Tour (Outdoors)	<p>Hear how this landscape has changed from forest to farmland to bogland, and about the everyday lives of our neolithic ancestors.</p> <p>See the exposed field walls and dwelling enclosure and try being an archaeologist by probing for a hidden wall.</p> <p>Walk on the bog with its colourful mosses, heathers, lichens, sedges and insect-eating sundews, to the background music of the lark.</p>	High. On boardwalk with a number of steps. Wet Weather clothing and sturdy footwear advised. The terrain and the weather can be challenging	Min. N/A Max. 50	60 minutes	€4.00 Group
Self-guided Tour (Indoors)	<p>Indoor presentations including an exciting immersive experience opened in 2022. Meet our ancestors from the hunter gatherers, to the first farmers and the metalworkers. See how the local environment and landscape has been ever changing.</p> <p>Experience the fascinating story of the ongoing discovery of the most extensive stone age landscape.</p>	Mild. Indoors fully accessible.	Min. N/A Max. N/A	60-120 minutes	€4.00 Group

On-site Facilities

- Free car park (25 spaces) approx. 100m to Visitor Centre.
- Free coach parking (6 spaces) approx. 100m to Visitor Centre. Drop-off/pick-up at disabled entrance.
- Toilets, wheelchair accessible toilets, baby changing facilities.

Booking Details

T: +353 (096) 43325 E: ceidefields@opw.ie

Languages

Audioguides and recorded guided tour in French, German, Italian, Spanish, Chinese, I.S.L.

Tea Rooms

Serving own home made refreshments. Groups must pre-book.
Maximum capacity 55. E: ceideladle@hotmail.com

Nearby

Downpatrick Head, Wild Atlantic Way
Ballinglen Museum of Art, Ballycastle
Jackie Clarke Museum, Ballina

Biodiversity

Walk on the bog with its colourful mosses, heathers, lichens, sedges and insect-eating sundews, to the background music of the lark. Enjoy stunning views from the sea cliffs. We are committed to preserving our natural blanket bog environment and include education on the significance of our bogs as carbon sinks in climate change mitigation. 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

Committed to reducing waste and recycling. In line with 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 end October

Daily: 10.00 – 18.00

Last admission 17.00

November to end of mid-March

Daily: 10.00 – 17.00

Last admission 16.00

Location

Summercove, Kinsale, Co Cork
P17 AY18

Located approx. 2km from Kinsale town. Divert from the R600

Ireland's finest example of a 17th century star-shaped fortification.

As one of the largest military installations in the country Charles Fort has been associated with some of the most momentous events in Irish history. The most significant of these include the Jacobite Williamite War in 1690 and the Irish Civil War in 1922-23. Charles Fort was declared a National Monument in 1973. Across the estuary is James Fort, an earlier structure, designed by Paul Iye in 1602, in the aftermath of the 1601 Battle of Kinsale.

Protecting the town and harbour of Kinsale with its strong ramparts, bastions and outer defensives, Charles Fort will introduce you to the history of the making of modern Ireland. Here you will explore Ireland's heritage as a former British colony and its strategic maritime and historical connections with Europe.

Join one of our knowledgeable OPW guides to learn about Charles Fort's military architectural splendour. Discover what life was like for the enlisted soldier and his family and encounter the many interesting personalities associated with Charles Fort's military past.

Or you can meander around the site at your leisure and experience our multi-media exhibition within our restored Barrack Stores. After your voyage of discovery why not sit back and soak up the stunning views of Kinsale harbour from our Tearooms, while enjoying a selection of home-baked delights.

Highlights

- Multi-media exhibition centre.
- Seasonal Tea Rooms with panoramic views of Kinsale Harbour.
- Witness the stunning architectural splendour of a 20-acre coastal artillery fort.
- Embrace the breath-taking views of Kinsale harbour from our upper rampart walk.
- Seek out the legendary White Lady of Charles Fort while appreciating the impressive panoramic views of Kinsale Harbour.
- Children's seasonal fun trails and treasure hunts.

Visitor Experiences

EXPERIENCE	DESCRIPTION	FITNESS LEVEL	MIN/MAX NUMBERS	DURATION (APPROX.)	PRICE PER PERSON
Guided Tour	<p>Discover cutting edge military architecture from the 17th century. Explore the life of a British Army Redcoat in an Irish garrison town. Hear tales of ghostly apparitions, cruel punishments and scorched earth devastation.</p> <p>Find out how the Fort evolved from Siege Warfare to Hippy Flower Power!</p>	<p>High.</p> <p>Uneven and sloped terrain and unprotected high walls. Suitable footwear is required.</p> <p>Not all areas are wheelchair accessible.</p>	Min. N/A Max. 45	40 minutes	<p>€5.00 Adult €4.00 Senior/Group €3.00 Child*/Student €13.00 Family U12's Free</p> <p>No additional cost for a pre-booked guided tour.</p> <p>*12-18 year-olds</p>
Self-guided Visit	<p>Explore the grounds of Charles Fort at your leisure. A free map is available in nine languages. Experience our multi-media exhibition, WW1 and Royal Munster Fusiliers photographic exhibition. Don't forget to ask about our seasonal children's trails.</p>	<p>High.</p> <p>Uneven and sloped terrain and unprotected high walls. Suitable footwear is required.</p> <p>Not all areas are wheelchair accessible.</p>	Min. N/A Max. N/A	40 minutes	<p>€5.00 Adult €4.00 Senior/Group €3.00 Child*/Student €13.00 Family U12's Free</p> <p>*12-18 year-olds</p>

On-site Facilities

- Off road car and coach parking – free of charge. The main entrance gate is only 100m from the parking area.
- On-site Tea Room serving delicious home-baked delicacies (seasonal opening).
- Toilets, wheelchair accessible toilet and baby changing facilities.

Booking Details

T: +353 (0)21 477 2263 E: charlesfort@opw.ie

Languages

Leaflets available for €0.50 in the following languages: Irish, English, French, German, Spanish, Dutch and Polish. Free maps of the site available in: Irish, English, Dutch, French, German, Italian, Polish, Portuguese and Spanish.

Parklands/Walks

Scenic walkway from Kinsale town to Charles Fort along the 'Scilly Walk', approx 30-40 minutes' walk.

Scenic coastal walk beyond Charles Fort to Preghane Headland (south-east from Charles Fort). Preghane Headland is the site of the former British and later the Irish Army's Firing Range.

Tea Rooms

The Charles Fort Tea Rooms are open daily from May to September. Weekends only from mid-March to April and October. Seating capacity 50. To pre-book for groups please email charlesfort@opw.ie

Nearby

Old Head of Kinsale Signal Tower, approx. 18km
Kinsale Harbour Cruises, 3km
Walking Tours of Kinsale (from Tourist Office), approx. 3km
Blarney Castle, approx. 37km
Cork City and 'The English Market', approx. 27km

Biodiversity

Wonderful walkways available for you to amble along in the vicinity of Charles Fort. These coastal paths will enable you to experience the flora, fauna and sea life of this rich and diverse coastal landscape. 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

Committed to reducing waste and recycling. In line with 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. Locally sourced homemade cakes and scones served in our Tearooms. Drinking water available to 'top-up' your travel bottle. Kinsale is served by public transport

Daniel O'Connell House – Derrynane House

Co Kerry



Opening Hours

March to 30th September

Daily: 10.00 – 16.00

October to November

Daily: 10.00 – 16.00

Location

Caherdaniel, Killarney, Co Kerry,
V23 FX65

Located 3.5km from Caherdaniel
(off the N70, the Ring of Kerry)

Immerse yourself in Derrynane; breath-taking coastal retreat of Daniel O'Connell 'The Liberator'.

Derrynane House, the family home of Daniel O'Connell, showcases The Liberator's life and lasting impact on Irish culture, human rights and democracy. The original demesne landscape is set within Derrynane National Historic Park and covers over 120 hectares with extensive woodlands, informal gardens, spectacular coastline, archaeology, architectural features and internationally protected wildlife and habitats. Visitors can explore 300 acres unspoilt Irish landscape with wildlife habitats of international importance, 1.5 km of wild Atlantic coastline, informal woodland gardens with rare plant collection and endangered South American species.

Amongst the Walks and Trails on site are the Seashore Nature Trail, Fairy House Woodland Trail, Mass Pat and Kerry Way.

Derrynane has a Green Flag award for meeting the highest international standards of quality, management, amenities and sustainability in public green spaces. Derrynane is situated in the core zone of the Kerry Dark Sky Reserve, one of three Gold Tier Reserves in the world.

Highlights

- Museum dedicated to the life and career of Daniel O'Connell.
- Informal woodland gardens with rare plant collection and endangered South American species.
- Events calendar: Discover Derrynane family event, poetry and music events, annual Daniel O'Connell Summer school.
- Tea Rooms serving delicious fare located in the courtyard.

Daniel O'Connell House – Derrynane House

Co Kerry

Visitor Experiences

EXPERIENCE	DESCRIPTION	FITNESS LEVEL	MIN/MAX NUMBERS	DURATION (APPROX.)	PRICE PER PERSON
Guided Tour (Indoors)	Pre-booked guided tours that explore the home of one of Ireland's great historic figures – Daniel O'Connell 'The Liberator'. See the house, private chapel and coach house and learn about O'Connell's life and far-reaching legacy. View the many original and unique family relics and artefacts on display including furniture, portraits, silver and O'Connell's chariot.	On flat surface – indoors Wheelchair accessible	Min. 10 Max. 45 (group over 27 will be split)	45 minutes	€5.00 Adult €4.00 Group €3.00 Student €13.00 Family U12's Free
Self-guided Tour (Indoors)	as above	as above	Min. 1 Max. 27	45 minutes	as above
Seashore Nature Trail (Outdoors)	Self-guided family nature trail with 20 stops. Explore scenic coastal habitats, diverse flora and fauna, including rare species such as the Natterjack Toad, Kerry Slug and Kerry Lily, and natural wildflower meadows.	Moderate. Uneven surfaces. Suitable footwear required. Fragile environment. Do not wander off trail.	Min. N/A Max. N/A	80 minutes	€1.50 guide book
Woodland Fairy Trail (Outdoors)	Self-guided fairy trails in the woodlands. Search for the fairy homes is a great family fun adventure. Even on a rainy day, the shelter of the woods makes this a memorable day out for all.	Moderate. Uneven surfaces. Moderate fitness level. Suitable footwear.	Min. N/A Max. N/A	45 minutes	Free

On-site Facilities

- Free car parking – 81 bays (approx. 500m to House)
- Free coach parking – 3 bays for large coaches and 2 bays for small coaches (approx. 500m to House)
- On-site Tea Room in courtyard.
- Toilets, wheelchair accessible toilets, baby changing facilities.

Booking Details

T: +353 (0)66 947 5113 **E:** derrynanehouse@opw.ie

Languages

Audio-visual available in French, German, Irish and English. Fully seated – maximum capacity 45. Laminated sheets available in 9 languages.

Parklands/Walks

Self-guiding walks through the gardens, parkland and beach.

Nearby

The Old Barracks, Cahersiveen, 29km
Skellig Chocolate Factory, Ballinskelligs, 26km
Kells Bay Gardens, Kells, Cahersiveen, 43km
Skellig Experience, Portmagee, 33km
Seafari, Kenmare, 53km

Tea Rooms

Ahamore Tea Rooms. Seats 30 indoor and 72 outdoors in the courtyard. Groups must pre-book. Contact: Deirdre Corridan **T:** +353 (0)87 2655920 **E:** d.corridan@gmail.com

Biodiversity

Green Flag Award, Dark Sky Reserve, Woodlands, National Historic Park, South American Plant Collection, Natterjack Toad, Kerry Lily. 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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Opening Hours

March to November

Daily: 10.00 – 17.15

Location

The Square, Newcastle West,
Co Limerick, V42 YD76

Seat of power of the Fitzgeralds lords of medieval Munster.

Built in 1198 by the Fitzgeralds during the Anglo-Norman invasion of Ireland. Desmond Castle grew in scale as the Fitzgerald's grew in power in medieval Ireland and became their seat of power when they gained the title the Earls of Desmond. The Fitzgerald's fell from power in the late 1500's when they led several rebellions against English rule in Ireland.

The castle was confiscated by Elizabeth 1 and granted to the Courtney family - the Earls of Devon who owned the site until the early 20th Century. During the Irish War of Independence 1919 -1921 the castle was occupied by the British Army. Part of the castle was destroyed by artillery fire in 1922 during the later Irish Civil War.

Highlights

- Stunning views of Newcastle West and its hinterland.
- Climb the castles winding medieval stairs.
- Learn about life in medieval Ireland.
- Hear how the castle survived a dozen attacks over several centuries.
- Museum display on the struggle for Irish Freedom 1916 -1923.
Interactive displays on local heritage sites.

Visitor Experiences

EXPERIENCE	DESCRIPTION	FITNESS LEVEL	MIN/MAX NUMBERS	DURATION (APPROX.)	PRICE PER PERSON
Guided Tours (Indoors)	The castle's history mirrors that of the English conquest of Ireland and the guided tour gives visitors an overview of religious, political and cultural change in Ireland over the last 800 years.	Steep winding stairs, small rooms and narrow passages.	Min. 2 Max. 50	30-45 minutes	Free admission

On-site Facilities

- Toilet facilities.

Booking Details

T: +353 (0)69 77408 E: desmondhall@opw.ie

Languages

Free information sheets available in English only.

Nearby

Pubs and restaurants – adjacent to the castle

Listowel Castle, 28km

King John's Castle, Limerick, 30km

Scattery Island, 50km.

Biodiversity

River Arra parkland adjacent to the castle – wild native Irish bird life. 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 at key locations

Sustainability

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Opening Hours

March to October

Daily: 10.00 – 18.00

Last admission 17.15

November to late March

Please refer to heritageireland.ie
for details

Location

Tír Chonaill Street, Donegal Town,
Co Donegal, F94 P996

Seat of the Kings of Tír Chonaill.

A small castle with a big history, Donegal Castle is a 'must see' on any visit to the North-West of Ireland. Located in the centre of picturesque Donegal Town in the rugged western part of Ulster, the castle sets on a rocky outcrop overlooking a bend in the River Eske. It is likely this location gave the surrounding town its name. Donegal is the Anglicisation of Dún na nGall, meaning 'Fort of the Strangers.' This may be a reference to a Viking presence on the site. The castle was the stronghold of the mighty Ó Domhnaill - O'Donnell – clan, one of the most famous and powerful dynasties in Irish history. The castle's tower house was built for Aodh Ruadh Ó Domhnaill – Red Hugh O'Donnell, possibly as early as 1470, to be his chief residence. The O'Donnells were to rule over Tír Chonaill, and dominate much of the rest of Ulster, from around 1200 up until the start of the 17th century, when the castle was seized by the English Crown. The castle was then granted to Sir Basil Brooke, around 1611, at the start of the Plantation of Ulster. The Brooke family lived in the castle until the 1670s, when they moved south-east to County Fermanagh.

The castle eventually fell into ruin around the early 18th century. The tower house was restored by the OPW in the early 1990s. Today, the site consists of a late 15th century Gaelic tower house, built for the O'Donnell dynasty, and an early 17th century Plantation Manor House, built in the Jacobean style for the Brooke family, all enclosed within a 'bawn' or fortified enclosure.

Highlights

- Medieval vaulted storeroom.
- Restored tower house interior – featuring Irish oak.
- Large, stone-carved Brooke fireplace.
- Fine Jacobean stone carvings throughout.

Visitor Experiences

EXPERIENCE	DESCRIPTION	FITNESS LEVEL	MIN/MAX NUMBERS	DURATION (APPROX.)	PRICE PER PERSON
Guided Tour (Indoors)	The guided tour begins in the courtyard, introducing the site and drawing attention to its architectural phases. Going inside, the tour moves up through the restored tower house before descending again to the remains of the manor house at ground level.	Moderate. Paved paths, steps and stairs, stone spiral staircase, cobbled areas, grass and gravelled areas.	Min. N/A Max. 40	35 minutes	€5.00 Adult €4.00 Senior/Group €3.00 Child/Student €13.00 Family U12's Free
Short Guided Tour	This 'mini tour' is often given by guides at the front desk, or just outside the door of the gatehouse. It offers an overview of the history and is particularly geared towards visitors with mobility issues.	Mild. Level path in courtyard.	Min. N/A Max. 30	10 minutes	€5.00 Adult €4.00 Senior/Group €3.00 Child/Student €13.00 Family U12's Free

On-site Facilities

- Visitor's toilets.
- Wheelchair accessible toilet.
- Baby changing station.

Booking Details

T: +353 (0)74 972 2405 E: donegalcastle@opw.ie

Languages

Self-guiding information leaflet available for use on site in approximately 20 languages. Site information leaflet for sale in English, €0.50 each.

Parklands/Walks

Small lawn at the castle. Donegal Castle is located upstream from the lovely River Bank Walk along the Eske River in Donegal Town.

Tea Rooms

None

Nearby

Donegal Abbey – ruined 15th century Franciscan Friary contemporary with the earliest portions of Donegal Castle, a few minutes' walk from Donegal Castle.

Slieve League – near Teelin, about a 45 minute drive west of Donegal Town.

The Bluestack Mountains – the Croaghs, just north of Donegal Town.

Biodiversity

Donegal Castle is located on the banks of the River Eske, near the Eske Estuary. The River Bank Walk, just downstream from the Castle, passes under mature trees including beech and scots pine. There are many bird species to be seen, including kingfisher. The river is also home to otters while seals can be seen where the estuary flows into Donegal Bay. A cacophony of rooks, jackdaws, starlings and thrushes can be heard on the castle grounds.

Sustainability

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Opening Hours

Open all year.

Winter: 09.30 – 16.00

Summer: 09.30 – 18.00

Location

Cill Mhuirbhigh, Árainn, Co Galway,
H91 YT20

A Bronze Age fortress on the edge of the Atlantic.

The most celebrated site on the islands is Dún Aonghasa. Perched on the highest point of Inis Mór's southern cliffs, and close to the narrowest point of the island, the ancient fort dominates its environs. Whoever controlled Dún Aonghasa could control not only the island, but the surrounding seas as well. Its massive ramparts would have been an intimidating sight for any trading ship looking for access to Galway bay that was foolish enough to try and avoid giving the islanders their slice of the action! There are two stages in the history of the fort. The earliest phase begins around 1100BC when 14 acres were enclosed by two massive stone walls. This was the late Bronze Age, a period of increasing militarisation, when giant forts were being constructed all over Ireland and weapons form a major part of the archaeological record. Despite this, it was an age of conspicuous consumption and elaborate jewellery in bronze, gold and amber was highly prized, not least in neighbouring Co. Clare where one of the highest concentrations of Late Bronze Age jewellery has been discovered. Excavations at Dún Aonghasa revealed stone moulds that show at least some of this jewellery was produced on the Aran Islands. The second stage in the history of the fort begins c.800 AD when the ancient walls were strengthened and added to. An impressive cheveaux de fris was added, a dense band of jagged, upright stones, surrounding the fort from cliff to cliff, making Dún Aonghasa an even more intimidating proposition for any would-be invaders. Safety Information: Dún Aonghasa is 1km from the Visitors Centre and is approached over rising ground. The last section of the path is over rough, natural rock and care is needed, especially when descending. Boots or strong walking shoes are recommended. There is no fence or barrier at the edge of the cliff.

Highlights

- The Visitor Centre – featuring an exhibition on Dún Aonghasa and its context on the Aran Islands.
- The hike – during the 15 minute walk up to Dún Aonghasa from the Visitor Centre, enjoy spectacular views of the mountains of Conamara to the south.
- Marvel at the massive girth of the walls which are over 4m thick in places, and up to 6m high.
- Enjoy the array of wildflowers which grow on the site in early summer.
- Take in the uninterrupted view of the horizon – on a clear day, you might be able to see Mount Brandon, Co. Kerry, 60km away.

Visitor Experiences

EXPERIENCE	DESCRIPTION	FITNESS LEVEL	MIN/MAX NUMBERS	DURATION (APPROX.)	PRICE PER PERSON
Guided Tour (Outdoors)	Take a guided tour with our friendly and experienced guides. All our guides are experts on the history of Dún Aonghasa, can also fill you in on island life.	Moderate Fort is 1km walk from visitor centre along gravel path. Suitable footwear required	Min. N/A Max. 30	30 minutes	€5.00 Adult €4.00 Senior/Group €3.00 Child/Student €13.00 Family U12's Free
Peek over the edge of the cliff	Crawl to the edge of the 87m high cliff and enjoy the blast of sea air as you peek over the edge.	Moderate Fort is 1km walk from visitor centre along gravel path. Suitable footwear required	Min. N/A Max. N/A	N/A	€5.00 Adult €4.00 Senior/Group €3.00 Child/Student €13.00 Family U12's Free

On-site Facilities

- Toilets
- Baby-changing facilities.

Booking Details

T: +353 (0)99 61008 E: dunaonghasa@opw.ie

Languages

Leaflets are available in Irish, English, French, German, Italian, Spanish and cost 50c.

Parklands/Walks

Dún Aonghasa is a 15 minute hike from the visitor centre, along a rough gravel path, with spectacular views of Connemara.

Tea Rooms

None on site.

Nearby

Dún Eochla – Early medieval ring-fort, 4km
Na Seacht dTeampaill – Medieval Church site, 2km
Dúchathair – promontory fort, 9km
Teampall Bheanáin – Medieval Church, said to be the smallest in Europe, 10km
Dún Eoghnacha – Early medieval ring-fort, 3km

Biodiversity

Dún Aonghasa is among farmland which is alive with wildflowers in early summer. It is also home to stoats and an array of seabirds

Accessibility

Dún Aonghasa Visitor Centre is located 8km from the pier in Cill Rónáin where the ferry arrives on Inis Mór. Private bike rental, tour buses and pony-and-traps are available in Cill Rónáin. The fort of Dún Aonghasa is located 1km walk from the visitor centre, along a steadily rising rough gravel path. Comfortable walking shoes are recommended.



Opening Hours

Mid-March to September

Daily: 10.00 – 18.00

From October to early November

Daily: 10.00 – 17.00

Last admission 45 minutes before closing

Location

Abbey Street, Ennis, Co Clare,
V95 AN28

One of Ireland's oldest Franciscan friaries and burial place of the ancient kings of Clare.

Since the 13th century, Ennis friary has been the town's focal point. It has been a Franciscan household, a royal seat of the kings of Thomond, a courthouse and jail and, more recently, a Church of Ireland parish church before becoming the town's leading heritage site.

The building contains an exceptional wealth of 15th and 16th century sculptures carved in the local hard limestone, including one of St Francis himself displaying the stigmata. An arch between the nave and transept bears a remarkable image of Christ with his hands bound.

Highlights

- Explore the ancient ruins of Ennis's oldest medieval building.
- Learn about life and death in early medieval Ireland.
- Hear the story of the Franciscan Friars, the O'Brien Clann and political and religious change in Ireland.
- Admire some of the finest surviving medieval Irish sculpture.
- Trace family burials.

Visitor Experiences

EXPERIENCE	DESCRIPTION	FITNESS LEVEL	MIN/MAX NUMBERS	DURATION (APPROX.)	PRICE PER PERSON
Guided Tours	Hear of the local history associated with the oldest surviving building in Ennis, the capital of County Clare. Admire some of the finest medieval examples of medieval Irish sculpture. Wander through the graveyard. Trace family names.	Moderate. Some narrow passages, uneven terrain and steep steps	Min. 2 Max. 50	Tour: 45 minutes Self-guide: Variable Kids Trails: 30 minutes Genealogy: Variable Artist: Variable	€5.00 Adult €4.00 Senior/Group €3.00 Child/Student €13.00 Family U12's Free
Self-guide Tour					
Kids Trail					
Genealogy					
Sketch or Draw					

On-site Facilities

- Coach parking available nearby.

Booking Details

Contact details monitored during the season from mid- March to early November.

T: +353 (0)65 682 9100 **E:** ennisfriary@opw.ie

Languages

Booklets available in English, Irish, French, German.

Parklands/Walks

The Friary graveyard and Cloister walk are tranquil outdoor areas where visitors can relax in the shadow of the medieval ruins towering over them.

Tea Rooms

None

Nearby

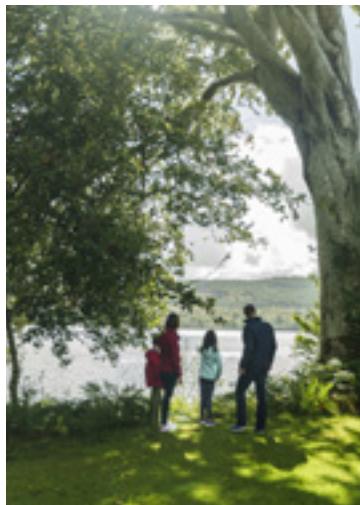
Clare Museum, 500m
Dromore Wood Nature Reserve, 5km
Bunratty Castle, 20km
Cliffs of Moher, 30km

Biodiversity

Wild birdlife nest at the friary including swallows, swifts and hawks. 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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Opening Hours

House and Gallery
Mid-May to November

Glebe Gallery
Daily: 10.00 – 18.00

Glebe House Guided Tours
Daily: 11.00 – 17.00

Out of season by appointment only
Glebe Gardens open all year round

Location

Churchill, Letterkenny, Co Donegal,
F92 WP70

A unique insight into the life and collection of the artist Derek Hill.

The Glebe House, dating from 1828, is set in woodland gardens just 15 minutes from Glenveagh National Park. The celebrated painter Derek Hill lived and worked here for nearly thirty years before presenting the house to the Irish state, along with an extraordinary collection of art.

Hill was a man of exquisite taste. The house itself, is as he left it, beautifully decorated with William Morris textiles and furniture of oriental design. His collection includes hundreds of works by leading national and international artists, such as Yeats, Picasso, Braque, Renior and Kokoshka, Japanese and Islamic art.

The Glebe Gardens an artist's haven in the Donegal Hills, the gardens are a delightful blend of the formal and informal covering twenty acres on the banks of Lough Gartan. Notable features of the garden are the extensive tree collection. The wild flower meadows, and the relaxed herbaceous beds.

Highlights

- Art collection including Picasso, Renoir and Jack Yeats.
- Roam freely through beautiful gardens of wild flowers and ancient trees.
- Curated exhibitions in The Glebe Gallery showcasing different artists.
- Tea Rooms serving home-baked goods, hot and cold drinks and delicious lunches.

Visitor Experiences

EXPERIENCE	DESCRIPTION	FITNESS LEVEL	MIN/MAX NUMBERS	DURATION (APPROX.)	PRICE PER PERSON
Self-guided Tour of Glebe Gallery (Indoors)	Visit the stunning Glebe gallery and discover a variety of art exhibitions. Roam the grounds at your own leisure.	Mild. Wheelchair accessible on the ground floor only.	Min. 1 Max. 60	N/A	Free
Guided Tour of Glebe House (Indoors)	Expertly led tour of Derek Hill's former home featuring William Morris textiles and wallpapers. Explore his fascinating collection of Islamic and Japanese art. National and international artists.	Mild. Wheelchair accessible on the ground floor only.	Min. 1 Max. 10	30-45 minutes	€5.00 Adult €4.00 Senior/Group €3.00 Child/Student €13.00 Family U12's Free
Self-guided Tour The Glebe Garden (Outdoors)	Explore the heritage gardens full of colourful flowers and ancient trees.	Mild. Uneven and mixed surfaces.	Min. 1 Max. 500	N/A	Free

On-site Facilities

- Toilets including universal access toilets available.
- Car parking available on site.
- Limited bus parking available.

Booking Details

T: +353 (0)74 913 7071 E: glebegallery@opw.ie

Languages

Irish language tours available on request. French and German translations available.

Parklands/Walks

The gardens are a blend of the formal and informal, covering twenty acres on the banks of Lough Gartan with meadows, herbaceous beds and an impressive range of trees to enjoy a walk in.

Tea Rooms

Seating for 25 persons. Serving hot/cold drinks, cakes and scones, light lunches soup, sandwiches. Picnic and outside seating available.

Nearby

Donegal Castle, Doe Castle and Newmills Corn and Flax Mills.

Biodiversity

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Sustainability

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Opening Hours

April to September

Daily: 10.00 – 17.30

October to November

Daily: 09.30 – 16.30

Location

Glengarriff, Co Cork, P75 X567

3km from Glengarriff (off the N71)

An island garden of rare beauty.

Located in the sheltered harbour of Glengarriff in Bantry Bay, Garinish is a small island known to horticulturists and lovers of trees and shrubs all around the world as an island of rare beauty. The gardens are the result of a creative partnership between Annan and Violet Bryce, then owners of Garinish and the renowned Harold Peto, architect and garden designer. Pathways lead around the island and taking in numerous features such as the Grecian Temple, Casita, Italian Gardens and Martello Tower. Bryce House, an Arts and Crafts building constructed in 1912 was intended as the gardener's cottage and later became the family residence and is presented as it was in their lifetime. The island is accessed by boat and on the journey over you will have stunning views of Glengarriff harbour and pass seals reclining on the rocks and if you are very lucky, you may even spot the White Tailed Eagle.

Garinish has a Green Flag award for meeting the highest international standards of quality, management, amenities and sustainability in public green spaces.

Highlights

- Formal gardens in an island setting with wonderful mountain and sea views.
- Tea Rooms serving delicious fare located in the courtyard.
- Walks and pathways through the island.
- Bryce House and its architectural features.
- Selection of classical sculptural artefacts.
- Mild local micro-climate supporting tender plants.

Visitor Experiences

EXPERIENCE	DESCRIPTION	FITNESS LEVEL	MIN/MAX NUMBERS	DURATION (APPROX.)	PRICE PER PERSON
Self-guided Island Tour (Outdoors)	Commencing outside the Café a pathway wind around the landscape, leading to a number of fascinating garden buildings, such as the Italian Garden, Grecian Temple, the Casita and Martello Tower.	Moderate Uneven surfaces. Suitable footwear advised. Do not wander off paths.	Min. N/A Max. N/A	90 minutes	€5.00 Adult €4.00 Senior/Group €3.00 Child/Student €13.00 Family U12's Free
Guided Tour Bryce House (Indoors)	Guided tours of Bryce House with tour guide. (Tours hourly during peak season - first come, first serve basis). Commencing in the reception area you will be introduced to the people whose vision and work created Garinish as it is today. As you pass through various rooms of the house viewing the contents, the guide will speak about some interesting details relating to the Bryce family and the many well known friends they hosted on Garinish.	Mild. On flat surface - indoors Wheelchair accessible. Universal access lift.	Min. N/A Max. 10	45 minutes	Included in above prices but subject to availability and numbers constraints.

On-site Facilities

- Toilets, wheelchair accessible toilets, baby changing facilities.

Booking Details

T: +353 (0)27 63040 **E:** garinishisland@opw.ie

Access to the island is via boat. Tour operators will need to contact one of the following ferry companies to book:

Harbour Queen Ferry www.harbourqueenferry.com

T: +353 (0)27 63116

M: +353 (0)87 234 5861

E: info@harbourqueenferry.com

Blue Pool Ferry www.bluepoolferry.ie

T: +353 (0)27 63333

E: info@bluepoolferry.com

Languages

Booklet available in German, French, Spanish and Italian €2.00. Leaflet available in Irish €0.50

Parklands/Walks

Enjoy the many features of Ilnacullin's varied garden landscape.

Tea Rooms

Garinish Island Tea Rooms - capacity 25 seats indoor and 20 outdoors in the courtyard. Groups must pre-book.

Contact: Margaret Harrington **T:** +353 (0)86 821 9813
E: magcake22@gmail.com

Nearby

Bantry House, Bantry, 20km

Derreen Gardens, Derreen, Co Kerry, 30km

Glengarriff Nature Reserve, Glengarriff, 3km

Bamboo Park, Glengarriff, 3km

Seafari, Kenmare, Co Kerry, 33km

Biodiversity

Green Flag Award. Nesting site of White Tailed Eagle.

Sustainability

Water fountain. Solar panels used in Bryce House. Biodegradable cups used by Tea Room. Water sold in biodegradable containers.

Ionad an Blascaoid – The Blasket Centre

Co Kerry



Blasket Centre Opening Hours

March to mid-November

Daily: 10.00 – 18.00

Last admission 17.15

Great Blasket Island Opening Hours

Seasonal opening from April to end of September

Opening times and hours dependent on private ferry operators, and weather conditions.

Normally 10.30 departure
Dún Chaoin, 17.00 return

Location

Dún Chaoin, an Daingean,
Co Chiarraí
Dunquin, Dingle, Co Kerry,
V92 TH73

The story of a remarkable island community.

The Blasket Centre, on the western tip of the famed Dingle Peninsula in Co. Kerry, is a magical celebration of an Island life now gone, that of the Great Blasket. The story of the tiny community is both unique and emblematic, it is told in an acclaimed series of multi-media exhibits and presentations newly installed in 2022 to captivate visitors of all ages.

See how an internationally significant outpouring of literature and stories came from this windswept island community, how they survived the elements and eked out a frugal living, experience their music, song and traditions, the ebb and eventual demise of the island community in the 1950s.

The Blasket Centre itself is a striking modern building situated in a stunning mainland location overlooking the Blasket Islands. Walk to the stunning clifftop Viewing Platform and experience the power of the sea and the rugged landscape. Stroll through the exhibitions and have a perfect cup of coffee in the café with its panoramic windows to the sea.

A visit to the Great Blasket Island by privately operated ferry from Dunquin, Ventry or Dingle, is a more challenging but incredibly rewarding trip. Experience a guided tour of the deserted island village with expert OPW guides, see the restored cottage of Blasket author Tomás O'Crohan, visit the spectacular White Strand with its resident Seal colony and take in the staggering land and seascapes.

Highlights

- Immersive experience of a multi-media exhibition of artefacts, sound and video and photographic images.
- The story of a remote island life was told by the islanders in their own words and language.
- Walk to the spectacular clifftop Wild Atlantic Way Viewing Platform overlooking the Blasket Sound and Blasket Islands; Great Blasket Island.
- A never to be forgotten sea journey to the remote Great Blasket, home until 1953 to a unique community.
- A guided tour of the deserted island village, the home of writers, storytellers, fishermen and farmers from a bygone age.
- A bracing hike around the 6km long island with some of the most spectacular scenery in Ireland.

Ionad an Blascaoid – The Basket Centre

Co Kerry

Visitor Experiences

EXPERIENCE	DESCRIPTION	FITNESS LEVEL	MIN/MAX NUMBERS	DURATION (APPROX.)	PRICE PER PERSON
Blasket Centre (Indoors)	A self-guided tour at your own pace of the acclaimed Blasket Centre exhibition.	Mild. Suitable for all fitness levels and disabled.	Min. 1 Max. 40	45-90 minutes	€5.00 Adult €4.00 Senior/Group €3.00 Student €13.00 Family U12's Free
Walk (Outdoors)	A self-guided walk to the Blasket Centre Clifftop Viewing Point (1 km round trip)	Mild. Suitable for all fitness levels and disabled.	Min. 1 Max. 40	10-30 minutes	Free
Great Blasket Island (Outdoors)	A guided tour of the deserted island village. Transport by private ferry from Dingle, Ventry or Dún Chaoin.	Moderate. Access to island not possible for disabled persons.	Min. 1 Max. 30 Depending on ferry capacity	3-6 hours	Ferry charges – as published by operators Guided tours OPW – Free

On-site Facilities

- Free parking for 120 cars and 3 coaches, 100m from the entrance to Blasket Centre.
- Universal access toilets.
- Shop and café.
- Baby changing facilities.

Booking Details

OPW Blasket Centre: Online booking www.blasket.ie

T: +353 (0)66 915 6444 **E:** blascaod@opw.ie

Great Blasket Island ferry access please contact:

Blasket Island Ferries (DÚN CHAOIN)

T: +353 (0)85 775 1045

Dingle Boat Tours (DINGLE)

T: +353 (0)87 672 6100

Marine Eco Tours (VENTRY)

T: +353 (0)86 335 3805 marinetours.ie

Languages

Irish, English spoken. Audio-visual and audio guides in Irish, English, French, German and Spanish.

Parklands/Walks

A spectacular 19 hectare site with cliff walk, Wild Atlantic Way Clifftop Viewing Platform overlooking the Blasket Sound and Blasket Islands.

Tea Rooms

Cothú restaurant on site serving great coffee, snacks and full meals freshly produced on the premises.
Seating capacity (normal) 80 indoors and 20 outdoors.

Nearby

Slea Head, 5km
Dingle Oceanworld Aquarium, 16km
Gallarus Oratory, 14 km

Biodiversity

Take a stroll to the Great Blasket beach, An Trá Bán and see Ireland's largest grey Seal colony. Enjoy the abundant sea bird life teeming around the islands – Gannets, Cormorants, Puffins and Manx Shearwaters and more.

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.

Músaem na bPiarsach agus Páirc Naomh Éanna - Pearse's Cottage and Visitor Centre

Co Galway



Opening Hours

All year

Winter: 09.30 – 16.00

Summer: 09.30 – 18.00

Location

Ionad Cultúrtha an Phiarsaigh,
Conamara, Ros Muc, Co Galway,
H91 DW9A

The home of a 1916 rebel in the heart of Gaelic Ireland.

Ionad Cultúrtha an Phiarsaigh is located in Ros Muc, in the heart of the Connemara Gaeltacht, on the Wild Atlantic Way. It was here that Patrick Pearse, writer, educator and leader of the 1916 Rising built a cottage for himself on the shores of Loch Oíriúlach in 1909.

The Visitor Centre houses a fascinating interactive exhibition dealing with Pearse's legacy, and exploring the things that drew Pearse to Connemara: the area's unique landscape and history, and the ancient gaelic culture and language which is still alive in the area today. We also celebrate 21st century Connemara, which maintains the traditions of the past, while looking to the future.

Visitors can then take the short stroll across the bog to visit Pearse's cottage itself, left just as it was when he left the cottage for the final time in 1915, and meet our local guides who are steeped in Connemara's vibrant culture.

Highlights

- A series of short films, shown on a nest of screens of various sizes and shapes, presents a football match in the local GAA club: a race between 'húicéirí', Connemara's traditional boat; and scenes from the local naónra, or playschool.
- A short path through the heather and gorse leads across the bog, up to the cottage. Along the way are benches to pause and admire the views of the surrounding lakes and mountains, and information about the local environment.

Músaem na bPiarsach agus Páirc Naomh Éanna - Pearse's Cottage and Visitor Centre

Co Galway

Visitor Experiences

EXPERIENCE	DESCRIPTION	FITNESS LEVEL	MIN/MAX NUMBERS	DURATION (APPROX.)	PRICE PER PERSON
Guided Tour	Take a guided tour with our friendly and experienced guides. Visit Pearse's traditional 3-room thatched cottage which he built in 1909. He came to Conamara for the same reasons people still visit Conamara today – the people, the unique Gaelic culture and the dramatic landscape of mountains and lake.	N/A	Min. N/A Max. N/A		Free with admission €4.00
Self-guided Visit View the Audio-visual and Exhibitions (Indoors)	This short audio visual film features beautiful Conamara scenery, as well as some of the music and dance that makes Conamara famous. The interactive exhibition covers placenames, history and stories of the local area.	Mild. Wheelchair accessible.	Min. N/A Max. N/A		Free with admission €4.00

On-site Facilities

- Toilets, wi-fi, café, baby-changing facilities.
- Parking for 2 coaches and 30 cars.

Booking Details

T: +353 (0)91 574292 E: icpconamara@opw.ie

Languages

Leaflets are available in Irish, English, French, German, Italian, Spanish and cost 50c. Free, returnable Information cards on the same languages are available in Pearse's Cottage for self-guided visitors.

Parklands/Walks

Pearse's Cottage is short 5-10 minute walk along a gravel path, from the Visitor Centre. There are benches and information points along the way, and places to shelter from the rain if necessary.

Nearby

Trá an Dóilín, unique coral beach, An Cheathrú Rua, 25km
Aughnanure Castle, Oughterard, 34km
Mungo Murphy Seaweed Company, Ros a Mhíl, 24km
An Ceardlann, craft village, An Spidéal, 36km
The Seaweed Centre, Leitir Mealláin, 35km
The Emigrants Commemorative Centre, Carna, 22km

Biodiversity

Pearse's Cottage sits next to a natural bog which is alive with wildflowers in early summer, and bog cotton and heather, later in the year. 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. This site also follows 'Leave no Trace' principles. Visitors are asked not to litter and to bring any items home for recycling/ composting.



Opening Hours

May to September

Daily: 10.00 – 17.15

Location

The Square, Listowel, Co Kerry,
V31 RD93

Where the Fitzmaurice Clann made their last stand.

Listowel Castle stands on an elevation overlooking the River Feale, above the location of a strategic ford. The castle was built by the Fitzmaurice family circa 1400. Although only half of the building survives, it is still one of Kerry's best examples of Anglo-Norman architecture.

Listowel Castle was the last bastion of the Fitzmaurice Clann in their rebellion against the forces of Queen Elizabeth I in 1600 during the Nine Years War. The castle's garrison held out for 28 days of siege before finally being overpowered by Sir Charles Wilmot. In the days following the castle's fall, Wilmot executed all of the rebels captured inside.

Highlights

- Stunning views of Listowel town and its hinterland.
- Climb the castle's winding medieval stairs.
- Learn about life in medieval Ireland.
- Hear the story of the Fitzmaurice rebellion and the siege of the castle.

Visitor Experiences

EXPERIENCE	DESCRIPTION	FITNESS LEVEL	MIN/MAX NUMBERS	DURATION (APPROX.)	PRICE PER PERSON
Guided Tours (Indoors)	Hear the story of the siege of the castle by the English in 1600 and the execution of the rebel garrison captured there.	Steep winding stairs, small rooms and narrow passages	Min. 2 Max. 15	30-45 minutes	Free admission

On-site Facilities

- No toilets on site.

Booking Details

T: +353 (0) 86 385 7201 **E:** listowelcastle@opw.ie

Languages

Free information sheets available in English, Irish, French, German and Spanish.

Parklands/Walks

N/A

Tea Rooms

Tea room in Kerry Writer's Museum adjacent to the castle.

Nearby

Kerry Writer's Museum, adjacent to the castle
Listowel Town Historic walking trail, Lartigue Monorail and Railway Museum, 4km
Ardfert Cathedral, 28km
Scattery Island, 35km

Biodiversity

River Feale nature walk begins adjacent to the castle – wild native Irish flora and fauna. 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

Pedestrian access to the site and other local amenities. 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. This site also follows 'Leave no Trace' principles. Visitors are asked not to litter and to bring any items home for recycling/ composting.



Opening Hours

March to early November

Daily: 9:30 – 17.00

Location

Ross Road, Killarney, Co Kerry,
V93 V304

3km from Killarney, off the N71,
Kenmare Road

A lakeside citadel steeped in legend.

Ross Castle sited on an inlet of Lough Leane was built by the O'Donoghue chieftains in the 15th century. Legend has it that O'Donoghue slumbers under the lake and every seven years rises on his magnificent white horse. Following the Desmond Rebellion, the castle changed ownership to Donal McCarthy Mór and eventually to the Browne family – ancestors of the Earls of Kenmare.

The castle contains numerous defensive features such as bartizans on two corners from which missiles could be dropped on enemies, a murder hole and numerous musket loops. An unusual feature on an Irish castle is an oak door hinged from projecting stone brackets high above the entrance door allowing soldiers to defend the entrance door directly from above. The rooms included in the guided tour contain antique furniture and tapestries. Ross Castle occupies an unique setting on lakeshore and in a National Park.

Highlights

- Collection of late medieval furniture and tapestries
- Exhibition room with display model of Ross Castle and information panels
- Lakeside setting with stunning views in Killarney National Park
- Walks and Trails – Ross Island Mining Trail

Visitor Experiences

EXPERIENCE	DESCRIPTION	FITNESS LEVEL	MIN/MAX NUMBERS	DURATION (APPROX.)	PRICE PER PERSON
Guide Walking	Guided tours of Ross Castle with tour guide. Explore the defensive features, furniture and interiors. No Self-Guided option.	Moderate. Steep spiral staircases. The castle is not wheelchair accessible only reception, exhibition and toilet.	Max. 15 (groups of 16+ will be split)	45 minutes	€5.00 Adult €4.00 Group €3.00 Student €13.00 Family U12's Free
Ross Island Mining Trail	Self-guided trail.	Moderate. Uneven surfaces. Suitable footwear required. Do not wander off trail.	Min. N/A Max. N/A	40-120 minutes	Free

On-site Facilities

- Free car parking – approx 110 bays split between two car parks (approx. 500m from site)
- Free coach parking – 3 bays (approx. 500m from site)
- Toilets, wheelchair accessible toilet.
- No stands for bicycles

Booking Details

T: +353 (0)64 663 5851 E: rosscastle@opw.ie

Languages

Leaflets available in German, French, Italian – €0.50 each.

Parklands/Walks

Ross Castle is situated in Killarney National Park with self-guided walking trails commencing at Ross Castle to Ross Island and other trails into the park.

Tea Rooms

Small external kiosk selling takeaway drinks and snacks.

Nearby

Killarney House, Killarney, 4 km
Muckross House, Killarney, 10 km
Killarney National Park – Torc Waterfall, 11 km
and Ladies View, 19 km
Lily of Killarney Watercoach Tours (depart from Ross Castle)
Crag Cave, Castleisland, 31km

Biodiversity

Ross Castle is adjacent to a lake and is located in Killarney National Park. Killarney House contains an exhibition to orientate visitors and introduce them to the landscape and flora and fauna of the Park.

Self-guiding walks through the Park which lead through woodland, open spaces and lakeshore.

Sustainability

Drinking fountain. Although not specific cycle paths, many visitors hire bikes in Killarney to cycle through the National Park and to Ross Castle. 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 September

Daily: 10.00 – 18.00

Please note that access to the island is dependent on tidal/weather conditions.

Location

Kilrush, Co Clare

Follow in the footsteps of St Senan.

Off the northern bank of the Shannon Estuary lies Scattery Island, the site of an early Christian settlement founded by an extraordinary man.

St Senan, who was born in the area, built his monastery in the early sixth century. It included a mighty round tower, which at 36 metres is one of the tallest in Ireland.

There are six ruined churches on the site too. The Church on the Hill stands on the highest point on the island, the very place where, legend has it, an angel placed Senan so that he could find – and then banish – the terrible sea-monster called the Cathach.

Scattery was invaded many times over the centuries. The Vikings in particular believed that the monastery held many riches and returned several times to ravage it.

The island's role evolved from spiritual sanctuary to military lookout and estuary navigation hub. Scattery became a strategic maritime site, a Napoleonic battery was built in 1814, and river pilots settled here.

A short boat trip will take you to the island, where you can explore its multi-layered, 1,500 year history. Charge applies for the boat trip. Access is weather and tide dependent.

Highlights

- Explore the magical Scattery Island, rich in legend and stories.
- Scattery offers a calm and tranquil environment in which visitors can explore a wonderful range of interesting sites all within walking distance.
- Marvel at the monastery's ancient ruins including the 36m tall round tower.
- Enjoy the now uninhabited island's, unspoilt natural beauty.
- Home to rare birdlife and schools of dolphins (during summer).

Visitor Experiences

EXPERIENCE	DESCRIPTION	FITNESS LEVEL	MIN/MAX NUMBERS	DURATION (APPROX.)	PRICE PER PERSON
Guided Tours (Outdoors)	Walking tour of the island including the abandoned village and the 1,500 year old monastery.	Moderate Uneven surfaces, suitable footwear is advised.	Min. N/A Max. 55	60 minutes	Free
Ferry journey to island	Ferry journey to and from Scattery Island – during good weather seals and dolphins are often sighted on this journey.	N/A	Min. N/A Max. 55	30 minutes	Contact Ferry operator Scattery Island Tours

On-site Facilities

- Car and coach parking.
- Toilets and wheelchair accessible toilets.
- Baby changing facilities.

Booking Details

T: +353 (0)87 995 8427 **E:** scatteryisland@opw.ie

Access by private boat, 2.5km boat trip from Kilrush Marina – scatteryislandtours.com

Tea Rooms

Tea, coffee and packed lunches are available from Scattery Island Tours with advance booking.

Nearby

Ennis Friary, Listowel Castle, Desmond Castle Newcastle West, Ardfert Cathedral.

Biodiversity

Beautiful semi-natural grass land which is home to an array of wild bird, animal and plant life which is of great interest to ecologists who visit. Dolphins may be spotted on the boat trip to the island. 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 at key locations.

Sustainability

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.



Opening Hours

Landing Tours: mid-May to end of September (weather dependent)

Location

Portmagee, Co Kerry
Located 12km off the coast of Kerry

An island monastery towering over the sea.

The magnificent Sceilg Mhichíl is one of only two UNESCO World Heritage Sites in the Republic of Ireland and is a unique and magnificent site. It has outstanding universal value as denoted in its archaeological, historical, spiritual and natural heritage on the island.

Sceilg Mhichíl, comprising a well preserved monastery and a remote hermitage perched on a rock in the Atlantic, is the most spectacularly situated of all the early medieval Irish monastic sites. The islands' isolation has helped to preserve and protect the monastic remains, allowing the visitor to marvel at the remarkable achievements of the monks. Sceilg Mhichíl is also an internationally renowned site for the breeding of seabirds with its steep slopes and cliffs providing nesting places for a variety of seabirds. It is this combination of cultural and natural heritage which imbues the island with a strong sense of beauty and spirituality.

When inscribing the site on the World Heritage List in 1996 UNESCO (United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation) described Sceilg Mhichíl as a unique example of early religious settlement, which illustrates, as no other site can, the extremes of Christian monasticism.

On the summit of this awe-inspiring rock off the Kerry coast is St Fionan's monastery, one of the earliest foundations in the country. The monks who lived there prayed and slept in beehive-shaped huts made of stone, many of which remain to this day. The monks left the island in the thirteenth century. It became a place of pilgrimage and, during the time of the Penal Laws, a haven for Catholics. Following in the monks' footsteps involves climbing 618 steep, uneven steps. Getting to the top is quite a challenge, but well worth the effort.

As well as the wealth of history, there is a fantastic profusion of bird life on and around the island. Little Skellig is the second-largest gannet colony in the world.

Highlights

- Awe inspiring panoramic views.
- Beehive huts.
- Flora and Fauna – puffins, gannets, etc.
- Informational talk from experienced guide staff at the monastery.

Sceilg Mhichíl UNESCO World Heritage Property

Co Kerry

Visitor Experiences

EXPERIENCE	DESCRIPTION	FITNESS LEVEL	MIN/MAX NUMBERS	DURATION (APPROX.)	PRICE PER PERSON
Guided Tours	<p>Landing tours must be pre-booked via the local boat operators who hold an OPW permit.</p> <p>Visitors travel to and from the island via boat and are afforded approx. 2.5 hours on the island before being collected.</p> <p>A brief safety talk is provided at the bottom of the monastery steps, after which visitors make their way up to the monastery unguided. At the monastery, an OPW guide will give a short talk about the history of the island and visitors are welcome to look around the monastery.</p> <p>There are numerous areas to take in the views, but visitors should not do so on the steps. Landing tours can be cancelled at short notice due to weather and sea conditions. This is outside the control of OPW and the permitted boat operators.</p>	<p>Moderate.</p> <p>Uneven surfaces.</p> <p>Suitable footwear advised.</p> <p>Do not wander off paths.</p> <p>Steep climb (600 steps).</p> <p>Sheer drops and unguarded edges. Not suitable for those with mobility issues/vertigo/fear of heights/heart condition/lung condition.</p>	<p>Min. N/A Max. 180 per day*</p>	<p>2 hour 30 minutes on the island plus boat travel time (allow an hour each way)</p>	<p>OPW does not charge an entry fee. (please check with boat operators for travel costs)</p>
Eco Tour	<p>Boat tour circumnavigating the islands. This tour may be more suitable for people who have mobility issues, health conditions etc. as mentioned above.</p> <p>This tour is not affiliated with OPW in any way and visitors do not land on the island. This tour takes place on the boat only.</p>	Check with boat operators	Check with boat operators	Check with boat operators	Check with boat operators

* There are 15 boat operators permitted by OPW to land visitors at the site. Each operator may make one trip to the island per day carrying a maximum of 12 passengers. Kayakers or private boats will not be given access to the island.

On-site Facilities

- Toilets

Booking Details

Access to the island is via boat. Tour operators will need to contact one of the permit holders listed on www.heritageireland.ie to book.

Tea Rooms

None

Nearby

Ross Castle, Derrynane House, Ilnaculin – Garinish Island, Skellig Experience Visitor Centre, Cahergall Stone Fort, Leacanabuaille Ring Fort, Ballinskelligs Abbey, Valentia Heritage Centre.

Biodiversity

Recently designated as a 'Hope Spot' (Greater Skellig Coast). The site is one of Ireland's most important sites for breeding seabirds, both for the diversity of the species and the size of the colonies it supports. The Atlantic waters surrounding the island is home to creatures like bottlenose dolphins (*Tursiops*), the elusive flapper skate (*Dipturus batis*) and stingrays (*Dasyatis pastinaca*).

Sustainability

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Opening Hours

March to October

Daily: 10.00 – 18.00

Last admission 17.15

Location

Abbey Street, Sligo, F91 K796

Where friars' prayers echo among the ruins.

This Dominican priory known as Sligo Abbey has dominated Sligo since the town was founded in the mid-13th century by the Anglo Norman lord Maurice FitzGerald. Much of the original church, chapter house and sacristy survive from that period alongside fine 15th-century additions such as the cloisters and belltower.

The Abbey was partially destroyed by burning in 1414, when it fell foul of an unattended candle, and suffered further mutilation during the Rebellion of 1641. According to legend, worshippers salvaged the abbey's silver bells at that time and threw it into Lough Gill. You can hear them peal even now, provided that is, that you are wholly free from sin.

Despite the ravages of history, the abbey contains a great wealth of carvings, including Gothic and Renaissance tomb sculpture, a well-preserved cloister and a sculptured 15th-century high altar – the only such altar to survive in an Irish monastic church.

Highlights

- Wealth of medieval carving.
- Gothic and Renaissance tomb sculpture.
- High altar – the only surviving example in an Irish monastic site.
- Make a wish or maybe declare your love at the “Love Knot”.
- Feel the tranquillity in Sligo town’s only medieval structure.
- In situ medieval high altar.

Visitor Experiences

EXPERIENCE	DESCRIPTION	FITNESS LEVEL	MIN/MAX NUMBERS	DURATION (APPROX.)	PRICE PER PERSON
Guide Walking Tour of Sligo Abbey (Outdoors)	The guided tour begins just outside the visitor's centre, taking in the western view of the building before descending into the Nave of the Church. The guided tour begins just outside the visitor centre, taking in the western view of the building before descending into the Nave of the Church. Pausing at the Gothic sculpted O'Crean monument (1506), and passing through the rood screen, under the bell tower, and on to the medieval high alter. The tour then passes through the 13th century sacristy and chapter room, proceeding through the cloister, before ascending to the first floor to view what remains of the refectory and dormitory.	Mild. Some stairs and uneven ground. Stones may be slippery when wet. Wheelchair access to visitor centre and toilet, partial access to site.	Min. 10 Max. 50	50 minutes	€5.00 Adult €4.00 Group/Senior €3.00 Student/Child €13.00 Family U12's Free

On-site Facilities

- Small exhibition.
- Toilets.
- Public car park close to site.

Booking Details

T: +353 (0)71 914 6406 E: sligoabbey@opw.ie

Languages

Self-guide leaflet in English, French, Spanish, Italian, German, Dutch, Russian, Portuguese, Polish, Lithuanian, Hungarian, Ukrainian, Catalan, Croatian, Czech, Japanese and Mandarin.

Tea Rooms

None

Nearby

Historic Sligo Town on the banks of the Garavogue River is a major cultural hub on the Wild Atlantic Way.

Sligo County Museum displays memorabilia from Ireland's northwest ranging from the Stone Age through to W.B. Yeats's Nobel Prize for Literature.

Carrowmore Megalithic Cemetery, 4km.

Parke's Castle, 10km.

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 site.