



Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council



Vibrant COUNTY GALWAY



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Welcome to Galway

Our Mission

Our mission is to promote County Galway as Ireland's leading cultural and natural heritage tourism destination - a vibrant and integrated destination that respects its unique culture and environment, proudly sharing it with visitors in engaging ways. County Galway celebrates diversity, protects its heritage and is led by sustainable principles.

A Vibrant County

Epic coastlines, unspoiled magnificent golden beaches, wonderful wild landscapes and lofty mountain peaks, marvel at all that County Galway has to offer. With a promise of unforgettable moments at every turn—where history meets adventure and every journey feels like a story waiting to unfold. County Galway's unique culture and dramatic landscape captivate all who visit.

Plan your visit now!



Wild Atlantic Way



The Wild Atlantic Way is Ireland's renowned 2,500–2,600 km coastal touring route along the west coast, offering dramatic cliffs, charming villages, rich culture, and unforgettable landscapes.

County Galway's strategic position along the iconic Wild Atlantic Way makes it one of Ireland's most captivating destinations for visitors and tourists. Stretching from the raw beauty of Connemara's mountains and beaches to the cultural vibrancy of its towns and villages, the county offers an unforgettable blend of scenery, heritage, and hospitality. Visitors can explore dramatic coastal routes, charming villages, world-class food experiences, and a thriving arts and music scene—all set against the backdrop of the Atlantic Ocean. Whether seeking adventure, relaxation, or authentic Irish culture, County Galway delivers a truly unique and immersive experience. www.discoverireland.ie/wild-atlantic-way



Ireland's Hidden Heartlands



Ireland's Hidden HEARTLANDS

Ireland's Hidden Heartlands is a serene and scenic region at the heart of Ireland, offering lakes, rivers, forests, historic sites and vibrant villages for immersive nature and cultural experiences.

County Galway's rich landscape extends beyond its Atlantic coastline, with its eastern region forming a vibrant part of Ireland's Hidden Heartlands. This inland paradise offers visitors a slower, more restorative rhythm—where the River Shannon, Lough Derg, and expansive bogs and woodlands create a peaceful backdrop for outdoor adventure and cultural discovery. From scenic walking and cycling trails to historic towns, waterways, and welcoming rural communities, Galway's Hidden Heartlands invite tourists to immerse themselves in nature, heritage, and authentic Irish experiences.

Its strategic position—bridging the wild western seascape and the tranquil heart of the country—makes County Galway an unforgettable destination offering the best of both worlds. Plan your trip to Ireland's Hidden Heartlands with Discover Ireland. www.discoverireland.ie/irelands-hidden-heartlands

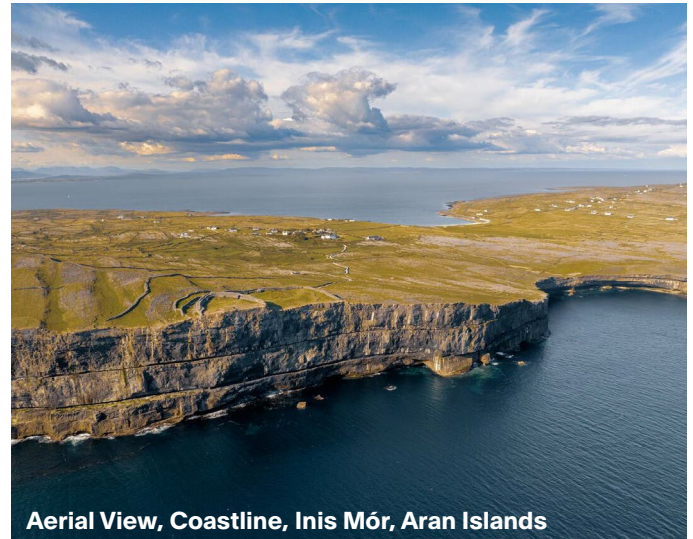


Portumna Forest Trail

The Gaeltacht and the Islands

Galway's Gaeltacht and Islands offer visitors an authentic taste of Ireland's living culture, where the Irish language, traditional music, and time-honoured ways of life flourish against a backdrop of stunning landscapes. From the vibrant coastal communities of Conamara to the wild beauty of the Aran Islands, this region invites travellers to slow down, connect with local heritage, and experience warm West-of-Ireland hospitality. Whether exploring windswept shores, chatting with locals in their native tongue, or enjoying a lively night of music, Galway's Gaeltacht and Islands bring the magic of Ireland to life in a way that's truly unforgettable.

Conamara includes large Gaeltacht areas, stretching from just outside Galway city out to Carna, northwards to Corr na Móna and into Mayo, and encompassing na hOileáin Árann. In addition to the outstanding scenery and heritage assets already mentioned across the County, in the Gaeltacht areas visitors have a unique opportunity to witness Gaelge in everyday use and the ongoing integration of traditional arts, skills and crafts in Gaeltacht communities. Conamara also has one of the



Aerial View, Coastline, Inis Mór, Aran Islands

strongest traditional music scenes in Ireland with highly accomplished Sean Nós singers and dancers. The County has four inhabited off-shore islands - Inis Oírr, Inis Meán, Inis Mór and Inisbofin, the first three of which are also within the Gaeltacht. The islands also offer a unique experience for visitors, in terms of way of life as well as the richness of landscape, seascape and biodiversity. For staying visitors, there is an opportunity to slow down and integrate into communities for whom the separation from the mainland is a very tangible reality around which tradition and lifestyle has evolved.



West Quarter Loop, Inishbofin

Attractions, Heritage & Culture

Galway offers an abundance of visitor attractions, is rich in heritage and culture, from the traditional culture of the Gaeltacht - with its music, dance, storytelling and Gaeilge - and the natural heritage of mountains, bogs and water, through to contemporary art and culture, and the maritime and boating heritage of the coastal areas. It carries evidence of thousands of years of history in its landscape and structures, is home to vibrant towns and villages, and continues to welcome new cultural communities that now make County Galway their home.

County Galway truly has something for everyone, offering a rich mix of large and small visitor attractions alongside some of Ireland's most breathtaking natural wonders. From lively cultural hubs and historic landmarks to tranquil lakes, rugged coastlines, and scenic walking trails, the county is full of places to explore at every pace and interest. Whether you're seeking adventure, heritage, nature, or family-friendly fun, Galway's diverse attractions ensure there's always something memorable waiting to be discovered.

County Galway Visitor Attraction

Attractions	Websites
Kylemore Abbey & Garden	www.kylemoreabbey.com
Coole Park	www.coolepark.ie
Connemara National Park	www.nationalparks.ie/connemara
Dún Aonghasa	heritageireland.ie/places-to-visit/dun-aonghasa/
Turoe Pet Farm & Leisure Park	turoepetfarm.com
The Sheep & Wool Centre, Leenane	www.sheepandwoolcentre.com
Pallas Karting	www.pallaskarting.com
Dan O'Haras Homestead Farm & Heritage Centre	www.connemaraheritage.net
Connemara Crystal Visitor Centre	www.connemaracelticcrystal.com
Aughnanure Castle	heritageireland.ie/places-to-visit/aughnanure-castle
Ionad Cultúrtha an Phiarsaigh	www.icpconamara.ie
Brigit's Garden	brigitsgarden.ie
Portumna Castle	portumna-castle-and-gardens
Rathbaun Farm	www.rathbaunfarm.com
Connemara Smokehouse	www.smokehouse.ie
Irish Workhouse Centre	irishworkhousecentre.ie
Athenry Castle	heritageireland.ie/places-to-visit/athenry-castle/
Aran Goat Farm	aranislandgoatscheeseandfoodtours.com/our-farm
Connemara Oyster Farm	www.dkconnemaraoysters.com
Battle of Aughrim Visitor Centre	Battle of Aughrim Visitor Centre Archives - Galway County Heritage Office
Kiltartan Gregory Museum	www.kiltartangregorymuseum.org

Kylemore Abbey



Explore County Galway's most stunning scenic routes and breathtaking viewpoints, dive into the adventure & let the journey inspire you!

Name/ Location of Trail	Websites
Sport Ireland – National Trails	Find Your Trails Sport Ireland
Coillte Trails	Walking Coillte
EuroVelo Cycling Route	Atlantic Coast Route by Bike EuroVelo Ireland
Joyce Country Geopark	Joyce Country & Western Lakes Geopark, Ireland – Homepage
Lough Derg Blueway	Route Lough Derg Blueway East
National Parks	Connemara - National Parks of Ireland
Discover the Wild Atlantic Way	Wild Atlantic Way Map with Sights
Millennium Forest Locations	Millennium Forest Location Millennium Forests Ireland
The Beara Breifne Way	Beara Breifne Way Tracing the Footsteps of O'Sullivan Beare
Coolepark	Maps & Trails - Coole Park Nature Reserve
The Walks Loughrea	The Walks, Loughrea Loughrea Facebook
Connemara and the Islands	Explore Walks/Síúlóidí • Connemara & the Islands
Glenamaddy Frass Loop	www.glenamaddyheritage.com/parish/townlands/frass/
Lackagh - Knockdoemore Walking Trail	Lackagh-Knockdoemore Walking Trail Sport Ireland
Headford Lace Trail	Headford Lace Trail leaflet
Sandybanks Lane Walkway, Headford	https://maps.app.goo.gl/gCPMPFRZ5saLMtJcA
Knockma Hill	www.galwaytourism.ie/knockma-hill/
The Western Way	The Western Way - Hiking Trail in the West of Ireland
Kilcornan Walking trails	Kilcornan Woodland Circular, County Galway, Ireland
Gort River Walk	Gort River Walk Guide – Gort River Walk
Killarainey Woods, Maigh Cuilinn	Moycullen (Maigh Cuilinn) Heritage Trails - Killarainey Woods Walk Sport Ireland
Sliabh Aughty Walking Trails	Slieve Aughty Trails - Gortnamanagh Loop Sport Ireland
Aghrane Forest Trail, Ballygar	www.coillte.ie/site/aghrame/ https://maps.app.goo.gl/oDx4ZDNzRnkyCkJg9
Derryjill Millennium Oak Forest	https://maps.app.goo.gl/CbYnat3efAvJKMsw7
Mam Éan Trail, Derryvealawauma	https://maps.app.goo.gl/irkTbzoQTHcsJp4A
Clonbur Wood	www.coillte.ie/site/clonbur-wood/ https://maps.app.goo.gl/qzst6h54vFaUrKzu9
Slí Chonamara	Slí Chonamara Sport Ireland
Sheanadh Mhacha, Leitir Mucú	www.plotaroute.com/route/1555996
Castlegrove Woods, Kilconly	https://maps.app.goo.gl/pZT8cza4BkDK5qmn6
Lough Derg	Lough Derg Blueway - Portumna Harbour to Portumna Bridge Sport Ireland
Blueway - Portumna Harbour to Portumna Bridge	https://maps.app.goo.gl/vVimGu69jut2aj6cA
Lismany-Kylemore Bog Walk, Lawrencetown	https://maps.app.goo.gl/tFgq5Rb89DzUntTc6
Canon Oliver Hughes Park Walkway, Corofin	https://maps.app.goo.gl/wcPJPwTFU8axqKao6

Walking Trails

County Galway's walking trails open the door to some of Ireland's most captivating landscapes, inviting visitors to explore everything from windswept Atlantic shores to quiet forest paths and ancient heritage sites. Whether you wander through the rugged beauty of Conamara, follow gentle lakeside routes along Lough Corrib, or stroll historic village trails rich with folklore, each path offers a unique glimpse into the county's wild charm and cultural heartbeat. With routes suited to every pace and interest, Galway's trails provide an enriching way

to experience the region's natural splendour and timeless character.

Trail Advice & Guidance Sport Ireland

When going out on a trail, it's important you consider the grading of the trail and ensure it matches your ability and level of fitness. Follow this link for more information: www.sportireland.ie/outdoors/trail-advice-guidance



Killarainey Woods Trail, Maigh Cuilinn





Gort River Walk, Gort



Castlegrove Woods, Kilconly, Tuam



Dunmore River Walk



Dunmore River Walk

Dunmore River Walk along the Sinking River provides an enhanced accessible amenity that supports biodiversity, outdoor recreation, and community well-being.

Recent improvement works include:

- Upgraded pathways and new seating areas
- Biodiversity planting using native species and ornamental trees

- Two feature flower beds and terraced seating
- Child-friendly play zones and cycle facilities

These works significantly improved the recreational and environmental value of the river corridor.

Gateway to the Corrib - Headford Area Cycling & Tourism Initiative



Nestled near the shores of Lough Corrib, the Headford area is emerging as an exciting hub for outdoor recreation, thanks to a cycling initiative that aims to connect communities and showcase the natural beauty of north Galway. The Gateway to the Corrib project supports expansion of the cycling and tourism network around Lough Corrib, with a

focus on Headford and surrounding communities, shaping a scenic, accessible route that links Headford to Kilbeg Pier, with enhanced signage, information boards, opening the door to a richer tourism experience in this picturesque region.



Heritage Trails

County Galway's heritage trails invite visitors to step through centuries of history, weaving together ancient landscapes, medieval towns, and vibrant cultural traditions. From coastal routes shaped by the Wild Atlantic to inland paths leading through monasteries, castles, and traditional market towns, each trail reveals a different chapter of the county's rich story.

Whether exploring the cobbled streets of historic villages, wandering through serene monastic ruins, or discovering hidden gems in the rural countryside, Galway's heritage trails offer an accessible and inspiring way to experience the region's enduring spirit and timeless charm.



Name/ Location of Trail	Websites
Abbey Village	Abby Heritage
Annaghdown	Annaghdown Heritage Trail
Athenry	Athenry Heritage trail
Athenry Memory Map & Heritage Trail Trail by kids for kids	Athenry Medieval Memory Map & Trail
Ballyglunin	Ballyglunin Heritage Trail
Battle of Aughrim Visitor Centre	Battle of Aughrim
Creggs	The Heritage of Creggs
Dunmore: Digital Story	Changing Times in Dunmore
Derrycrag Woods	Derrycrag Woods
Galway East Trails and Tours	Galway East Trails
Glenamaddy Turlough	Glenamaddy Turlough
Kilbought Church and Graveyard, Kilreechill	Kilbought County Galway
Killimor Heritage Trail	Killimor Heritage Trail
Knockma Woods Loop	Knockma Loop
Loughrea Heritage Trail	Loughrea Heritage Trail
Mannion Clan Historical Trail	The Mannion Clan Historical Trail
Milltown	Miltown Heritage Trail
Monivea	Monivea Heritage Trail
Monivea Demesne	Monivea Demesne
Mountbellew	Mountbellew
Mountbellew Woodland Trail	Mountbellew Woodland Trail
Oranmore Heritage Trial	Oranmore Heritage Trail
Rahasane Turlough	Rahasane Turlough
Rinville Park	Rinville Park
Ross Errilly Franciscan Friary	Ross Errilly
Roundstone	The Heritage of Roundstone
Tawin Island	Tawin Island
St Kerrill's, Abbey, Cloonkeenkerrill	St Kerrill's Abbey, Cloonkeenkerrill - Galway Community Archaeology
Wetlands of Northeast Galway	Wetlands of North East Galway
Williamstown Bog	Williamstown Bog

Beaches & Water Amenities



Beaches are an important amenity for County Galway, valuable for both their recreational and tourism potential. Under the Bathing Water Quality Regulations, local authorities are required to identify bathing waters and monitor them annually for safety, water quality, and their level of use. During the 2026 bathing season from 1st June to 15th September, Galway County Council is responsible for managing and monitoring water quality at 27 bathing areas, by arranging for water samples to be taken and analysed throughout the bathing season.

All bathing water quality monitoring results are available at the blue flag beach notice boards and online at <https://www.beaches.ie/> where you can access the most up-to-date published data and water quality results of every beach monitored. Designated beaches are classified as either 'excellent', 'good', 'sufficient', or 'poor'. During the 2025 season, 94% of bathing waters sampled in County Galway were classified as 'excellent'. This website also contains additional useful information on all designated bathing waters regarding available amenities, tides, and lifeguarding facilities.





The Blue Flag designation is awarded annually for the bathing season and bathing areas awarded a Blue Flag must comply with excellent standards related to water quality, environmental information, safety, and services including lifeguards and toilet facilities. An interactive map of all Blue Flag Beaches and their facilities is available online at <https://beachawards.ie/blue-flag/sites-2-2/>

Galway County Council has applied for Blue Flag Awards for the following beaches in 2026:

- Long Point, Loughrea Lake
- An Trá, Inis Oirr
- Trá an Dóilín, An Cheathrú Rua
- An Trá Mhór, Indreabhán
- Portumna Bathing Area
- Traught Beach, Kinvara
- Céibh an Spidéil, An Spidéal
- Cill Mhuirbhígh, Inis Mór



**Green
Coast
Award**

The Green Coast Award is for beaches which have excellent water quality,

but which are also prized for their natural, unspoilt, environment. To be considered for a Green Coast Award, applicant beaches must be managed in partnership with the local community by a Clean Coast group who participate in community clean-ups and work in partnership with the local authority and An Taisce to protect and enhance their adopted stretch of coastline. An interactive map of all Green Coast beaches and their facilities is available online at <https://beachawards.ie/green-coast/sites/>

Galway County Council has applied for Green Coast Awards for the following beaches in 2026:

- Poll na gCaorach, Formna, Inis Oirr
- Aillebrack, Ballyconneely
- Trá Inis Oírr
- Dumhach, Inishbofin
- East End, Inishbofin
- Renvyle Beach, Tully



Changing Shelter at Traught Beach, Kinvara



New Shower facility at An Chéibh Nua, An Spidéal



The new swim shelter at An Chéibh Nua sa Spidéal

Lifeguard Service

Galway County Council operates a share lifeguard service for both Galway County Council and Galway City Council during the bathing season.

During the bathing season from 1st June to 15th September, the lifeguarding service in the County generally operates:

- on a weekend only basis (including bank holidays) in June
- daily during July and August
- on a weekend only basis in September

Lifeguard hours are generally 11am - 7pm, however, times are subject to change depending on availability of lifeguards and weather conditions. Lifeguard patrol days and times are displayed on the Information Noticeboard at each Blue Flag beach, and you can book a Beach Wheelchair, where available, by calling to the Lifeguard Hut during the lifeguard hours of operation. The lifeguarded beaches in the County for 2026 are:



Beach	Amenities
Ceibh Nua, An Spidéal	Limited parking, Portaloos, Shower, Changing Shelter, Beach Wheelchair
An Trá Mhór, Indreabhán Roundstone	Parking, Permanent Toilets, Beach Wheelchair
Trá an Dóilín, An Cheathrú Rua	Parking, Permanent Toilets, Beach Wheelchair
Traught, Kinvara	Parking, Permanent Toilets/Showers, Changing Shelter, Beach Wheelchair
Long Point, Loughrea	Parking, Permanent Toilets & Showers
Portumna Bathing Area	Parking, Permanent Toilets & Showers
An Trá, Inis Óirr	No parking, Permanent Toilets
Cill Mhuirbhígh, Inis Mór	No parking, Permanent Toilets, Beach Wheelchair
Gurteen, Roundstone	Weekend only Lifeguard service - Limited parking, Portaloos
Trá na mBan, An Spidéal	Weekend only Lifeguard service, Parking, Public Toilet in village

Stay Safe



Beach Warning Flags are flown at lifeguarded beaches while the Lifeguards are on duty.

Warning Flags include:

- Red Flag: Dangerous for bathing.
- Red/Yellow Flag: Lifeguards on duty.
- No Flag: No Lifeguards on duty.

Safe Swimming:

Water Safety Ireland asks you to remember the following rules for safe swimming:

1. Swim at lifeguarded waterways, between the Lifeguard Flags.
2. Swim with others, never alone.
3. Swim within your depth and stay within your depth, parallel to shore.
4. To escape a rip current sweeping you out to sea, swim parallel to shore until free.
5. Enter the water at a shallow gradient and never jump or dive, in case of hidden hazards.
6. Enter cool water slowly, allowing your body to acclimatise to prevent cold shock.
7. Swim for short periods as cool water can lead to disorientation and hypothermia which weakens your muscles.
8. Take advice from Lifeguards and observe the water safety signage.

9. Note the location of the nearest lifebuoy in case of emergency.
10. Never use inflatable toys in open water as wind can carry them and you away from shore.
11. Never put pressure on others to take risks.
12. Children must be supervised at all times near water.
13. Do not swim under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
14. To enjoy your safe swimming, learn swimming and lifesaving skills.

Water Safety Awareness and Education:

The County Committee of Irish Water Safety holds water safety weeks at up to eleven locations in the summer including, Inis Mór, Inis Óirr and Inis Méan and at Oughterard, Cor na Mona, An Cheathrú Rua, Portumna, Loughrea and Salthill beaches.

Courses are held at Leisureland, Galway on Sunday mornings from October to June.

For further information on water safety visit Irish Water Safety <http://www.iws.ie/>



Portumna Bathing Area

The Blue Flag swimming area in Portumna offers a beautifully maintained lakeside escape on the tranquil shores of Lough Derg. *With Excellent Water Quality* achieved consistently over recent years, this shallow, picturesque amenity provides a welcoming environment. Set within a wider recreational hub that connects to Portumna Forest Park and scenic lakeside walks, the area is ideal for a relaxing day out in nature. Lough Derg itself is rich in wildlife, especially waterfowl, adding to the peaceful atmosphere and natural charm of the location. Whether you're swimming, picnicking, or simply enjoying the lakeside views, Portumna's Blue Flag bathing area invites you to unwind and experience one of County Galway's loveliest outdoor amenities.



Long Point, Loughrea

Long Point in Loughrea is one of County Galway's most popular lakeside spots, offering a Blue Flag beach with excellent water quality and beautiful views across Lough Rea. The amenity area features safe swimming with a seasonal lifeguard service, changing rooms, toilets and showers, together with a jetty, picnic spaces, and easy lakeshore access—making it ideal for families, walkers, and anyone looking to unwind by the water. It's also a favourite hub for kayaking, canoeing, and open-water swimming thanks to its calm, clean waters and well-maintained facilities.

Nature lovers will appreciate that Lough Rea is an important site for waterbirds, with regular visitors from continental Europe, making the area a rewarding spot for casual birdwatching and peaceful wildlife encounters.



Shannon Bank Park – Outdoor Swimming Pool

Shannon Bank Outdoor Swimming Pool is a unique floating pool on the River Shannon near Banagher, offering free, accessible, and scenic “wild swimming” experiences for the community and visitors.

For more than 30 years, this pool has been a cherished amenity and meeting place for families and communities from East Galway and surrounding counties. Now, it has been given a fresh lease of life with the addition of wide pontoons for lounging, better seating for sun-seekers, and a launch point for kayaks and paddleboards. For the first time, there’s wheelchair access too..

This project was awarded significant funding through Fáilte Ireland’s Regenerative Tourism and Placemaking Scheme, which is co-funded by the EU and the Government of Ireland under the EU Just Transition fund. The pool will remain free to use, keeping alive the tradition of open, accessible fun for all.

Castle Harbour, Portumna

This Portumna RV site is a great facility with 16 spaces, toilets, grey waste disposal, water and electricity. It is regulated by a metered €10 charge for parking over a 24 hour period with additional services available via a smart card. You can purchase a smart card from over 90 retail outlets listed here <https://www.waterwaysireland.org/shop/smart-card-sellers>

All the services are operated under the auspices of Waterways Ireland in conjunction with Galway County Council.

This is an excellent base from which to explore such local attractions as Portumna Forest Park, Portumna Castle and Portumna Friary. There is also a playground nearby within easy walking distance and a picnic area on location.



Rinville Park

Rinville Park, located in a gentle rolling landscape on the shore of Galway Bay, south of Galway City and Oranmore, is one of County Galway’s most charming outdoor destinations. Set around a 16th-century castle, historic estate demesne, and sweeping coastal landscapes, the park offers a tranquil blend of woodland trails, open farmland, and shoreline paths with stunning views across Galway Bay, Galway City, and even the Burren in County Clare. Visitors can enjoy gentle walks, picnic areas, a children’s playground, and rich local wildlife, including herons, ravens, and otters, making it an ideal spot for families, nature lovers, and heritage explorers alike.



Palace Grounds, Tuam

This town centre public park offers a tranquil and welcoming retreat for visitors of all ages. The beautifully maintained green space boasts expansive lawns, vibrant flower beds, and shaded areas - perfect for picnics and relaxation. The Palace Grounds, Tuam has retained its Green Flag status, following assessment by *An Taisce*. This award highlights the consistently high standards of maintenance, biodiversity management, accessibility, and public amenity at the site. In addition, the Palace Grounds has retained the Green Heritage Site Accreditation. This prestigious award recognises green spaces of significant historical and cultural importance that demonstrate exemplary heritage conservation

and management. It marks the first Green Heritage accreditation achieved in County Galway, representing an important milestone.

The park offers a wide range of amenities including a playground, tennis courts, 3v3 basketball court, dog park and a sensory garden further enhances the inclusive, accessible amenities in the park.



Galway's Living Bog, Mountbellew

Galway's Living Bog, also known as Carrownagappul Bog, located near Mountbellew, is one of Ireland's largest remaining active raised bogs, offering a unique combination of ecological significance, cultural history, and visitor experiences.

Designated as a Special Area of Conservation, it is one of the 12 bogs chosen to be restored under the Living Bog Project. Measuring 850 acres, it contains fine examples of raised bog habitat and is one of the largest examples of remaining and restorable active raised bog in Ireland. Conservation work is currently underway at Carrownagappul.

At the Interpretive Centre, an audio-visual presentation will tell the story of raised bogs and their importance to the local community. Guided tours are available. Carrownagappul is unique in that it is accessible by a network of roadways, making it ideal for guided walking tours.



For more information on Galway's Living Bog please visit their website at galwayslivingbog.com. For enquiries and to book a guided visit; call 090 96 79765 or email gtcomountbellew@gmail.com.

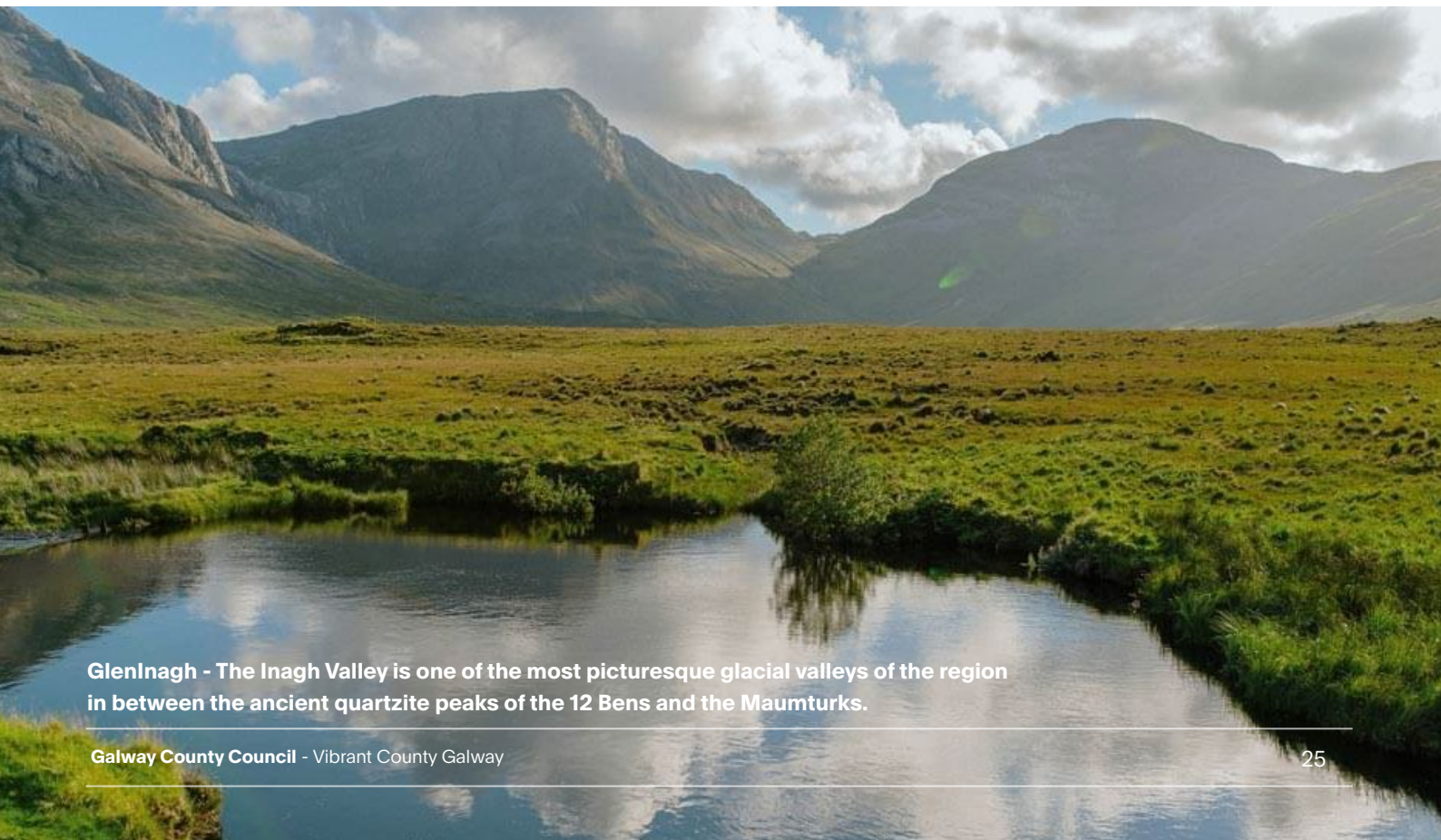


Killary Fjord - Stunningly beautiful, it is Ireland's only fjord.

Joyce Country & Western Lakes Geopark

Discover the magic of the Joyce Country & Western Lakes Geopark, Ireland's newest UNESCO Global Geopark, where 700 million years of geological history meet breathtaking landscapes shaped by ice, ocean, and time. Stretching across north Galway and south Mayo, this remarkable region invites visitors to explore ice-carved mountains, shimmering lakes like Lough Carra and Lough Mask, ancient limestone pavements, and charming villages such as Cong, Clonbur, Leenane, and Oughterard— each offering rich heritage, scenic trails, and authentic culture.

Recognised globally for its outstanding geology and natural beauty, the Geopark provides a window into Ireland's deep past while celebrating vibrant local communities and sustainable outdoor adventure. Whether you're hiking, cycling, tracing ancient landscapes, or simply soaking in the panoramic views, Joyce Country promises an unforgettable journey through nature, history, and heart.



GlenInagh - The Inagh Valley is one of the most picturesque glacial valleys of the region in between the ancient quartzite peaks of the 12 Bens and the Maumturks.

Playgrounds

A variety of playgrounds are available across the county, providing a safe and inclusive space for children to play. These playgrounds are supported by local community groups and offer a range of facilities to cater to different age groups and special needs. Many playgrounds feature inclusive play equipment and sensory play units to ensure that children of all abilities can enjoy safe and engaging play environments. In addition to traditional playground equipment, many playgrounds offer sports pitches, skateparks, and picnic areas.

For a comprehensive list of playground locations and more detailed information, you can visit the Galway County Council website or download the Lets Play Tar Liom ag Spraoi Co Galway Playground Guide.

Playgrounds | Galway County Council



Visitor and Heritage Centres

Discover Galway's rich and varied past through three remarkable heritage experiences: the Battle of Aughrim Visitor Centre, where the dramatic events of 1691 are brought vividly to life; the Athenry Heritage Centre, offering an immersive journey into one of Ireland's best preserved medieval towns; and the Irish Workhouse Centre in Portumna, a moving and insightful exploration of 19th century social history. Together, these centres provide a powerful window into the stories, struggles, and resilience that have shaped Galway and its people.



Battle of Aughrim Visitor Centre

Experience the Battle of Aughrim Visitor Centre and learn of the fascinating story behind the epic battle between William of Orange, James II, and Louis XIV, where 35,000 soldiers took to the battlefield and helped shape European history.

The award-winning Battle of Aughrim Visitor Centre in Aughrim, Co. Galway, commemorates the Battle of Aughrim, 'Ireland's Gettysburg', fought on 12th July 1691, during the closing stages of the Williamite-Jacobite War.

The visitor centre has incredibly detailed displays giving great insights into each of the three kings and their armies. Relive the battle through intricate illustrations and large-scale models showing the various stages of the day. See what it was like for soldiers at the time thanks to the amazing 'Dalton's Letter' film and historical re-enactments.

After your self-guided tour, take a walk along the Historical Trail or the Battlefield Trail.

Galway County Council received funding under the EU Just Transition Fund Digital Transformation Programme, and work is currently underway on

development of a new website, which will have an Online booking facility.

The Battle of Aughrim Visitor Centre is open seasonally from May to September each year. Opening hours: 10:30am-4:30pm Tuesday-Saturday and 2-5pm on Sundays. Last Admission: 4pm (Tuesday-Saturday) and 4.30pm on Sundays.

School tours, groups, special interest & educational tours are all welcome and enquiries can be sent to battleofaughrim@galwaycoco.ie



Visit as part of

**Ireland's Hidden
HEARTLANDS**



Athenry Heritage Centre

Athenry Heritage Centre offers visitors an engaging journey into one of Ireland's best preserved medieval towns. Set within the historic St. Mary's Church in the heart of Athenry, the award winning centre brings the past vividly to life through interactive exhibits, medieval costumes, and hands-on activities for all ages. Guests can explore replicas of medieval streets, weaponry, armour, and the town's original 14th century Mace and Seal—the oldest of their kind in Ireland.

The popular Medieval Experience invites you to dress as a knight, queen or monk, try your hand at archery, navigate a medieval maze, and discover the stories that shaped Norman Ireland. With its family friendly atmosphere, expert guides, and beautifully maintained walled garden, the centre is an ideal starting point for exploring the rich heritage of Athenry and the wider Galway region.

<https://www.athenryheritagecentre.com/>



IRISH WORKHOUSE CENTRE, PORTUMNA

Step inside the Irish Workhouse Centre in Portumna and uncover one of Ireland's most compelling heritage experiences. As one of the country's best-preserved workhouse complexes, it offers a powerful and thought-provoking journey into 19th-century life. Through guided tours, evocative exhibits, and

carefully restored original buildings, visitors gain a moving insight into the stories of those who entered the workhouse during some of Ireland's most challenging times. It's a place that educates, inspires, and lingers long after your visit.



ANGLING

County Galway has long had a reputation as an angling destination, with Lough Corrib having a particular reputation for wild brown trout and with an estimated 1,500 angling boats on the Lake. The County has a diversity of fisheries. In addition to brown trout, there is wild angling in mountain lakes, good sea and shore angling, and salmon fishing.

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

In addition to the nature-based experiences, there is a base of dedicated eco-tourism and sustainable tourism experiences in the County. These operators have made considerable effort to ensure that their tourism businesses operate to sustainability standards. To find out more, visit www.sustainabletravelireland.ie





Food & Drink

County Galway is a true feast for the senses, offering a rich culinary landscape with food and drink experiences that capture the spirit, flavour, and creativity of the West of Ireland. From bustling streets filled with artisan cafés and award-winning restaurants to charming village pubs serving hearty local fare, Galway's culinary scene is rooted in tradition yet alive with innovation. Fresh Atlantic

seafood, locally grown produce, craft brews, and passionate makers all come together to create unforgettable tastes. Whether you're after a cosy bite, a fine-dining treat, or a taste of genuine Galway hospitality, you'll find plenty to savour on an unforgettable food journey across the county.

Visit: [***Food and drink in Galway***](#)



Where to Stay

Planning your stay in Galway is easy with a wide range of accredited accommodation ready to welcome you. From charming B&Bs and cosy countryside retreats to boutique hotels and vibrant escapes, each accredited property meets trusted quality standards to ensure comfort, warmth, and

a memorable visit. Whether you're exploring the Wild Atlantic Way, discovering Ireland's Hidden Heartlands, or soaking up the culture that Galway has to offer, these approved places to stay offer the perfect base for your adventure - book your perfect stay! Visit: [***Where to stay in Galway***](#)

Whether you come for its sweeping landscapes, its vibrant culture, or its rich thread of history, County Galway offers experiences that stay with you long after you leave. From lively towns and dramatic coastlines to remarkable heritage sites and welcoming communities, every corner of Galway invites discovery. As you explore its stories, traditions, and scenic wonders, you'll find a county that is as captivating as it is unforgettable — a place that truly embodies the spirit of the west of Ireland.

Festivals & Events

Diverse Galway is the beating heart of Ireland's cultural scene. Discover art exhibitions, trad sessions, headline acts and street performances in this vibrant county.

County Galway has a rich cultural heritage, as well as an existing lively calendar of festivals and events that attract visitors and generates revenue for the local economy. For example, Clifden Arts Festival is the longest running community arts festival in Ireland.

Year round there is a high standard cultural offerings in all artforms and a large resident artists community. Specifically within heritage, festivals and events that are well established include Medieval Loughrea, Athenry Walled Town Day, Féile na gCloch and Cruinniú na mBád.

Diverse Galway is the beating heart of Ireland's cultural scene. Discover art exhibitions, trad sessions, headline acts and street performances in this vibrant county. In addition, walking festivals such as the Connemara Mountain Walking Festival in Leenane and the Inisbofin Walking Festival are helping to attract visitors during the shoulder season. There are also a number of sporting/adventure events that bring valuable tourism to the County and help to raise the profile of the destination for more serious outdoor activity. These include the Connemara 10K, the Killary Swim and the Tour de Connemara.



A sample of the Festival & Events that awaits you!

THE IRISH WORKHOUSE CENTRE, PORTUMNA TO HOST THE NATIONAL FAMINE COMMEMORATION 2026

The National Famine Commemoration 2026 will take place at the Irish Workhouse Centre in Portumna on **Sunday, May 17th**. The State ceremony, which will include military honours and a wreath-laying, will be broadcast live on national television.

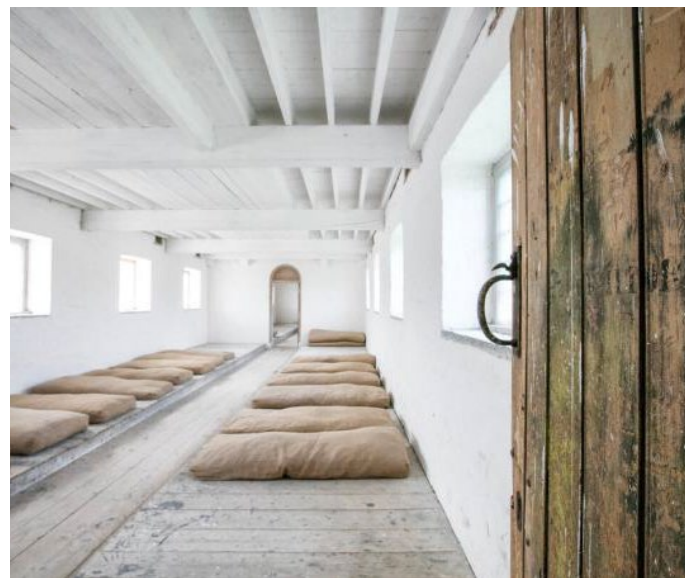
Alongside the formal commemoration, Portumna will host a conference on the Irish Famine, bringing together leading scholars and researchers as well as other related heritage events in the week leading up to the National Famine Commemoration.

A bilingual workbook for children is also being developed to support schools, offering accessible material on the Famine and the workhouse system. The Portumna Workhouse opened in 1852 and is regarded as one of the most complete surviving complexes of its kind. It has become a hub for lectures, exhibitions and cultural events.

This will be the first time the National Famine Commemoration has been held in County Galway

since the annual initiative was established in 2008. A range of local organisations and individuals, including Portumna Tidy Towns, South East Galway Integrated Rural Development CLG, Portumna Chamber of Commerce, local businesses, the Heritage Officer, Archivist and the City and County Librarian supported County Galway's bid to host the event.

Information on the national initiative is available at irishfamine.ie, with details on the Irish Workhouse Centre at www.irishworkhousecentre.ie.



HERITAGE WEEK 2026

National Heritage Week 2026 will take place from 15–23 August, and this year we will once again shine a spotlight on the outstanding heritage activity taking place across County Galway. With the national theme “Heritage at Risk,” communities, groups, schools, and individuals across the county will be invited to explore the places, stories, traditions, and landscapes that need our care and attention.

Galway County is preparing once again for a high number of engaging, imaginative, and meaningful Heritage Week events. From community-led talks and tours to conservation workshops, family days, exhibitions, storytelling, music, digital heritage, and hands-on activities, groups across the county will respond to this year’s theme by highlighting what is at risk — and what can be protected — through local action.

The 2026 theme, “Heritage at Risk,” invites us all to reflect on the heritage that is vulnerable in a time of environmental change, social transformation, and technological shift. It encourages us to recognise the fragile elements of our built, natural, cultural, and intangible heritage — and to consider how we can respond with care, creativity, and collective responsibility.

County Galway’s communities have always been leaders in celebrating, conserving, and interpreting local heritage. National Heritage Week 2026 will once again offer a platform for groups countywide to share their stories, raise awareness, and inspire new custodians for the future.

www.heritageweek.ie

ATHENRY WALLED TOWNS DAY

Athenry Walled Towns Day takes place on Sunday 16 August, 1pm – 5pm in Athenry Community Park (H65 WP93) & Athenry Heritage Centre (H65 WC57)

Get ready for a fantastic day out in Athenry! Athenry Community Park and Athenry Heritage Centre will come alive as we host a free, family-friendly celebration showcasing the rich and vibrant heritage of this historic town.

Visitors of all ages will be welcomed into a colourful world of creativity, culture, and community spirit. Families will enjoy an exciting programme that will include arts and crafts, music, song and dance, medieval reenactments, puppet shows, children’s activities, food stalls, historical presentations, and a guided walking tour of medieval Athenry.

You will step back in time, discover new stories, and experience the magic of Athenry in a whole new way — an unforgettable day for all!



This event will be organised by Galway County Council's Heritage Office and Athenry Arts and Heritage Centre, with wonderful support from Athenry Tidy Towns, AthenryCommunity Council, the Athenry Area Office of Galway County Council, and the wider Athenry business and community network. This event is funded by the Heritage Council and Galway County Council.

For more information see:

www.athenryheritagecentre.com

and www.galway.ie

Féile na gCloch - 10TH-13TH SEPTEMBER 2026 INIS OÍRR



Féile na gCloch will return to Inis Oírr in 2026, transforming the island into a vibrant hub of creativity, craft, heritage, and community spirit. Now one of Ireland's most distinctive cultural festivals, Féile na gCloch continues to draw visitors from across the country and beyond to celebrate the enduring traditions of stonework and the unique landscape of the Aran Islands.

Hands-On Workshops: Learn by Doing

In 2026 the festival will once again place practical skill-sharing at its heart. Visitors will have the opportunity to take part in immersive, hands-on workshops that honour the island's rich stone-working heritage, including:

- **Dry stone wall building**, set against the backdrop of Inis Oírr's iconic limestone landscape.
- **Stone carving and letter carving**, guided by expert craft practitioners.
- **On-location sketching sessions**, capturing the island's distinctive scenery and built heritage, including its world-famous landmarks.
- **Lime mortar demonstrations**, showcasing the traditional skills that continue to protect and conserve our architectural heritage today.

Whether you are an experienced craftsperson or a complete beginner, Féile na gCloch 2026 will offer an inspiring and welcoming space to learn new skills and connect with others.



EXHIBITIONS, CREATIVITY & ISLAND CULTURE

Throughout the festival, there will be a series of engaging exhibitions celebrating the island's artistic, cultural, and environmental heritage.

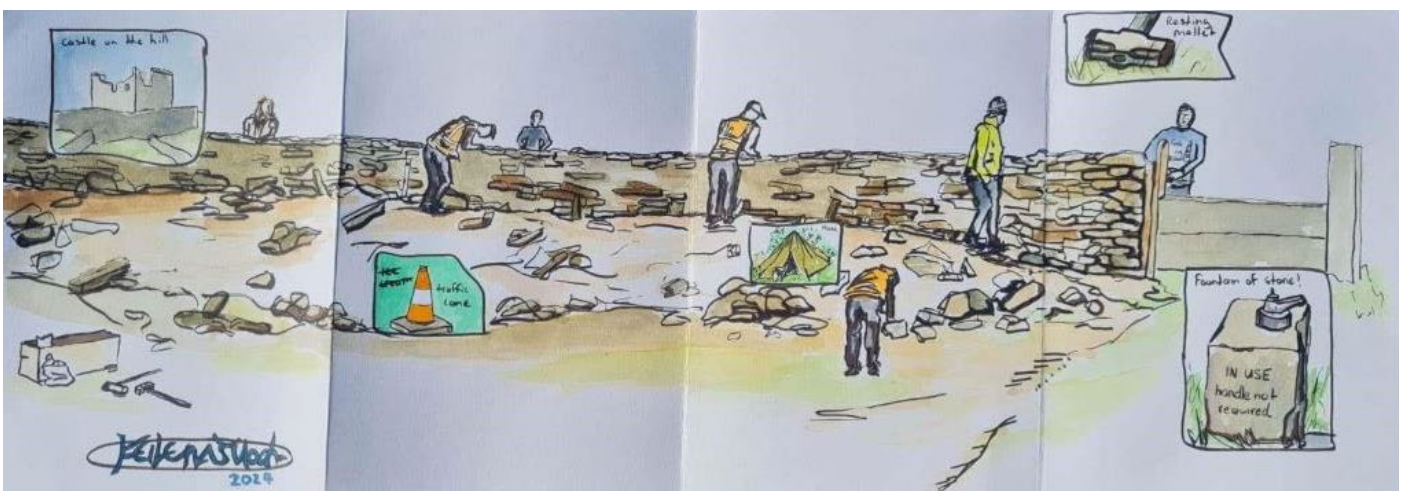
A FESTIVAL ROOTED IN UNESCO-RECOGNISED HERITAGE

Inis Oírr is an island shaped by stone. Its bóithríní (little lanes), fields, and dry stone walls tell generations of stories about resilience, craftsmanship, and community. Ireland's dry stone walling tradition – inscribed on the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage list in 2024 - is alive in every corner of the island.

Féile na gCloch brings this heritage to life. It invites visitors not just to observe, but to participate: to build, carve, sketch, and learn alongside craftspeople and islanders who carry the tradition forward.

For more information:

www.heritage.galwaycommunityheritage.org
or <http://discoverinisoirr.com/>





Culture Night 2026 is scheduled to take place across Ireland on **Friday, 18th September**.

This nationwide, annual celebration features free access to arts, heritage, and cultural events. Across County Galway, artists, community groups and professional arts organisations programme brilliant events for our audiences.

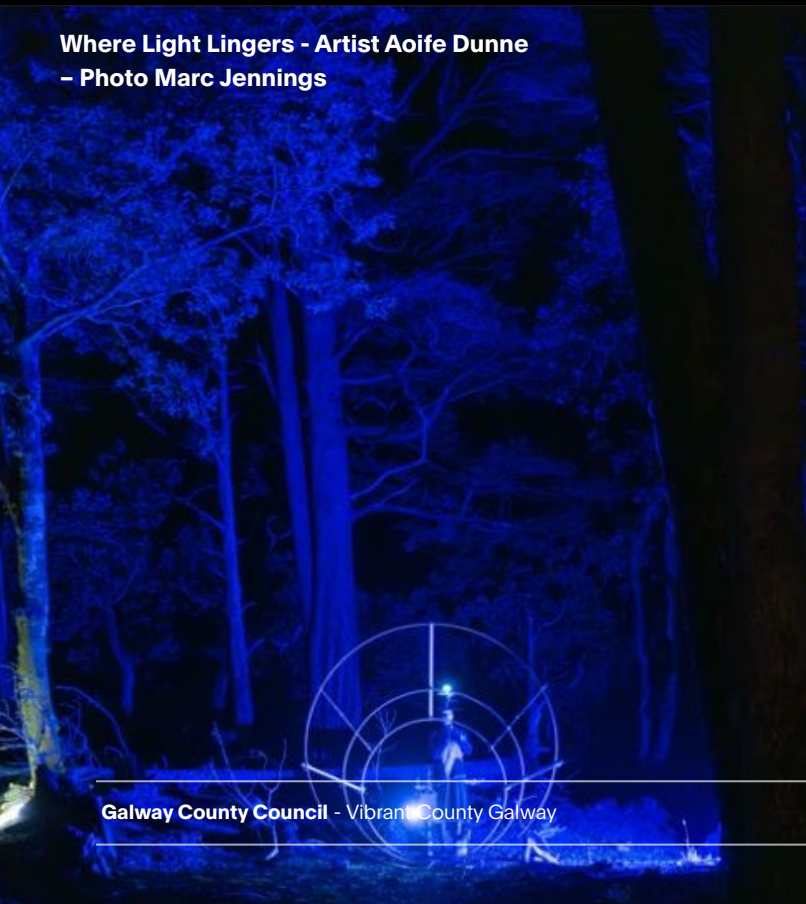
The events, performances and workshops spanned craft, film, literature, music, street art and spectacle, theatre, trad arts and visual art.

Images from “Where Light Lingers”, the 2025 Arts Office Culture night Late event at Kylemore Abbey.

The calendar of tourism events funded and supported by Galway County Council is available on www.galway.ie/en/community-tourism-arts/tourism



Where Light Lingers - Artist Aoife Dunne
– Photo Marc Jennings



Where Light Lingers - Artist Gillian O'Shea
– Photo Marc Jennings

