

Lough Derg

ACTION PLAN

2020 - 2024





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08 Action Plan Overview

A detailed action plan is set out in the accompanying Lough Derg Destination Action Plan 2020-2024 – an overview is given here

ACTION AREA	OBJECTIVES	
<p>ACTION AREA 1 Destination Management</p>	1.1	Resource the Partnership – Organise the stakeholder group and resource the tourism role at Lough Derg.
	1.2	Consolidate the Approach – Align with the Tourism Masterplan for the Shannon and Ireland’s Hidden Heartlands (IHH).
	1.3	Coordinate Lake Wide Initiatives – that deliver a high quality visitor experience.
	1.4	Measure Progress – Measure performance and remain responsive to emerging evidence on visitor behaviour and preferences.
<p>ACTION AREA 2 Destination Innovation</p>	2.1	Provide a Great Visitor Welcome – Ensuring a great welcome for visitors across the whole destination.
	2.2	Enable a Choice of Accommodation – Support the development of a variety of unique accommodation options to meet visitor needs.
	2.3	Facilitate Slow Travel – Make it easy for our visitors to explore Lough Derg sustainably by developing services along the slow travel network.
	2.4	Offer Great Food – Enhance the visitor experience with high quality, locally produced food on and around Lough Derg.
<p>ACTION AREA 3 The Visitor Experience</p>	3.1	Killaloe/Ballina Destination Hub – A natural playground with fresh perspectives on this iconic Shannon crossing; the perfect base to get active in nature
	3.2	Inis Cealtra (Holy Island) and Connected Destination Villages – Explore Inis Cealtra, a 6th century holy island connected across lake waters to a necklace of historic lakeside villages and harbours.
	3.3	Portumna Destination Hub – Uncover Irish history through a connected network of woodland, water and mountain trails, extending from Portumna’s historic core to nearby villages and monastic settlements.
	3.4	Nenagh Gateway Town – A bustling market town steeped in heritage, with a great reputation for food, compelling stories and a great welcome to the Lough Derg region at Nenagh’s Historic Quarter.
<p>ACTION AREA 4 Destination Marketing</p>	4.1	Develop a Distinctive Digital presence – Update and maintain a distinctive Lough Derg digital presence.
	4.2	Ensure Cohesive Communication – Work with national and local bodies to coordinate communication and ensure cohesive messaging.
	4.3	Partnership – Support marketing actions of tourism businesses.
	4.4	Be Market Ready – Work together to create and promote market-ready offers, packages and itineraries.

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ACTION AREA 1

Destination Management

Objective 1.1

Resource the Partnership

Organise the stakeholder group and resource the Tourism role at Lough Derg

ACTIONS		LEAD/ SUPPORT	YEAR
1.1.1	Reshape the Lough Derg Marketing Group into a Lough Derg Destination Management Organisation named Destination Lough Derg. Draw up terms of reference for tourism industry representation from each destination hub (Killaloe/Ballina, Portumna, Connected Villages, Nenagh).	LDMG	1
1.1.2	Appoint a dedicated Lough Derg Tourism Officer and additional support for Destination Lough Derg with a key focus on communication, co-ordination, building capacity and driving the delivery of the plan. This will include tourism business liaison and building connections with community groups with an interest in tourism.	DLD	1
1.1.3	Establish a Lough Derg Destination Recovery Task Force as a tactical response to guide the reactivation of the destination following the impacts of government safety restrictions to lead and to co-ordinate the ongoing process of returning the destination to a more normalised state.	LDMG	1

Objective 1.2

Consolidate the Approach

Align with the Tourism Masterplan for the Shannon and Ireland’s Hidden Heartlands (IHH).

ACTIONS		LEAD/ SUPPORT	YEAR
1.2.1	Support sustainable tourism within Destination Lough Derg guided by the Tourism Masterplan for the Shannon and the Ireland’s Hidden Heartlands proposition.	DLD/LAs, WI, FI, TB, CG, LDC	1-5
1.2.2	Support the development and implementation of forthcoming Tourism plans for the Beara Breifne Way and the Shannon Erne Pilgrim Way where appropriate.	DLD/LAs, TB, LDC, CG	1-3

Objective 1.3

Coordinate Lake Wide Initiatives

Initiatives that deliver a high quality visitor experience.

ACTIONS	LEAD/ SUPPORT	YEAR
1.3.1 Prepare a Lough Derg Interpretation Plan which builds up a database of key themes, stories and tourism experiences that are unique to the Lough Derg area and aligns with IHH themes. This will also provide local detail for the future Shannon Integrated Interpretation Strategy and Design Guide.	DLD/LAs, TB, CG, LDC	1
Festivals and Events		
1.3.2 Continue to support and encourage the development, delivery and marketing of a broad range of festivals and events that align to the themes of Lough Derg Interpretation Plan.	DLD/LAs, FI	1-5
1.3.3 Develop a database of Festivals and Events around Lough Derg to enable awareness raising of Lough Derg experiences.	LDTO	1
Lough Derg Blueway		
1.3.4 Build upon the success of the Lough Derg Blueway and continue to work with stakeholder groups through networking and marketing actions.	DLD/LAs, WI TB	1-5
1.3.5 Develop Lough Derg Blueway interpretation in line with the Lough Derg Interpretation Plan.	DLD/LAs, TB	2
1.3.6 Enhance experiences and connectivity along the Lough Derg Blueway by achieving and retaining accreditation.	LAs/TB	1-5
Discovery Points		
1.3.7 Support and deliver a feasibility study for six identified "Discovery Point" sites across Destination Lough Derg. Sites include: The Lookout, Ogonnoloe, Co Clare, Drumman Harbour, Co Clare, Ben Hill, Woodford, Co Galway, Swimming/Water Recreation Area, Portumna, Co Galway, Castlelough, Co Tipperary, The Lookout, Portroe, Co. Tipperary.	DLD	1

Objective 1.4

Measure Progress

Measure performance and remain responsive to emerging evidence on visitor behaviour and preference.

ACTIONS	LEAD/ SUPPORT	YEAR
1.4.1 Pool resources to invest in a robust data collection, market intelligence and impact assessment system.	DLD/ FI, TB	1-5
1.4.2 Source, channel and communicate both quantitative and qualitative intelligence that will support the business decisions of the destination's stakeholders, inform and monitor the implementation of the Visitor Experience Development Plan recommendations.		
1.4.3 Monitor and integrate into project delivery: visitor numbers, visitor satisfaction, visitor movement etc., including responding to "secret shopper" insights.		
1.4.4 Encourage Lough Derg businesses to feed data to the national tourism research unit and local survey initiatives.		

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ACTION AREA 2

Destination Innovation

Objective 2.1

Provide a Great Visitor Welcome

Ensure a great welcome is provided for visitors across the whole destination.

ACTIONS	LEAD/ SUPPORT	YEAR	
Support delivery of consistent visitor focus through training and development:			
2.1.1	Support tourism facing businesses and communities to access training to ensure consistent visitor experiences are encountered across the destination.	DLD/FI, TB, LEO, ETB	1
2.1.2	Promote and create awareness of the range of trade supports, advice, training and capacity building tools and services available through Fáilte Ireland, LEO and ETB e.g. FI Local Experts Programme, Fáilte Ireland's Trade Portal.	LDTO/TB	1

Objective 2.2

Enable a Choice of Accommodation

Support the development of a variety of unique accommodation options to meet visitor needs.

ACTIONS	LEAD/ SUPPORT	YEAR	
Support development of Accommodation that is 'distinctively Lough Derg':			
2.2.1	Prepare a feasibility study of Recreation Vehicle Aire de Service points in the Lough Derg region.	LDC/DLD, LAs, FI, TB, LEO	2
2.2.2	Support the Scattered Accommodation Concept (as outlined in the Fáilte Ireland Destination Town Guidelines) in Destination Lough Derg.		
2.2.3	Explore the potential of forest sites around Lough Derg as a suitable setting for low impact accommodation.		
2.2.4	Support the development of activity friendly accommodation characteristics e.g. drying rooms, cycle, canoe and equipment storage.		
2.2.5	Explore options for flexible alternative accommodation for large scale activity events (e.g. Quest.)		
2.2.6	Provide industry specific digital marketing and online booking training for accommodation providers in the Lough Derg Region.		

Objective 2.3

Facilitate Slow Travel

Make it easy for our visitors to explore Lough Derg sustainably by developing services along the slow travel network.

ACTIONS		LEAD/ SUPPORT	YEAR
Route Infrastructure			
2.3.1	Audit the connectivity, safety, accessibility and wayfinding along the existing looped land and water trail network in order to identify improvements in line with Blueway and Sport Ireland guidelines.	DLD/LDTO, CTO, FI, RRO, TB, LAs, LDCs, LDC, CW, LL	1-5
2.3.2	Prioritize the existing trails that lead directly from the town and village centres that offer looped experiences to visitors.		
2.3.3	Ensure accessible and sustainable links for visitors to both low and high adrenaline activities available across the trail network.		
Visitor Services			
2.3.4	Support a feasibility study that assesses 'Slow Travel' visitor services/ experiences across the region and prepare recommendations for the upgrade, expansion and enhancement of Lough Derg Blueway visitor experiences to grow Destination Lough Derg's reputation as a leader in sustainable tourism development. Consider the range of boating options, sailing, canoe hire, guided walking, horse-riding, bike hire, luggage transfer, 'learn-to' experiences, multi-day bookable experiences etc.	DLD/LDTO, CTO, FI, RRO, TB, LAs, LDCs, LDC, CW, LL	1-5
Public Transport			
2.3.5	Meet with Local Link operators (Clare, Tipperary, Limerick and Galway) to explore options for providing shuttle bus services throughout the Lough Derg region. Explore potential regular Local Link service from Birdhill train station/ Nenagh to destinations within Lough Derg region.	DLD/LDTO, CTO, FI, RRO, TB, LAs, LDCs, LDC, CW, LL	1-5
2.3.6	Promote the use of the "slow train to Ballybrophy" – linking Limerick and Dublin to the Lough Derg region (Birdhill and Nenagh).		
Deep Encounters with Heritage			
2.3.7	Identify the locations along the slow travel network which best articulate the themes and stories of the Lough Derg Interpretation plan and update/source information from Lough Derg Cultural and Heritage trail booklets. Support and develop immersive interpretation that animates these stories.	DLD/LDTO, CTO, FI, RRO, TB, LAs, LDCs, LDC, CW, LL	1-5

Objective 2.4

Offer Great food

Enhance the visitor experience with high quality, locally produced food on and around Lough Derg.

ACTIONS		LEAD/ SUPPORT	YEAR
Present Lough Derg food on a national platform			
2.4.1	Support a cohesive and locally distinctive, destination-driven food experience in line with Fáilte Ireland Food and Drink Strategy recommendations and Taste the Island objectives.	LDTO/ CTOs, FI Taste the Island team, TB, TFP, GG, local food producers	
Work with local food stakeholders; food producers and tourism providers			
2.4.2	Create links with the food producing community to promote Lough Derg food initiatives at production level, e.g. Irish Seedsavers; Brookfield Farm etc,	LDTO/ CTOs, FI Taste the Island team, TB, TFP, GG, local food producers	
2.4.3	Build a database of key Food Ambassadors for Lough Derg and invite to join digital campaigns.		
2.4.4	Encourage supply and presentation of locally produced food at every visitor experience/food outlet including 'direct marketing' of local food produce on premises.		
2.4.5	Support provision for and marketing actions for local farmers and producers markets e.g. Lakeshore Community Markets.		
2.4.6	Increase the number of accommodation providers offering a quality Irish Breakfast showcasing local produce (Tipperary Tourism 'Tipperary Breakfast Champions' model has been successful).		
2.4.7	Support where possible food producers in rural communities to diversify into tourism.		

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ACTION AREA 3

The Visitor Experience

Objective 3.1

Killaloe Ballina Destination Hub

A natural playground with fresh perspectives on this iconic Shannon crossing; the perfect base to get active in nature, discovering the compelling history, landscapes and beauty of Lough Derg

THE PROMISE TO VISITORS

Outdoor activities on your doorstep, incredible views and safe adventures in, on and along the water starting out from historic twin towns

ACTIONS		LEAD/ SUPPORT	YEAR
Improve the visitor experience of the Killaloe/Ballina public realm			
3.1.1	Support the preparation and delivery of the Town Enhancement and Mobility Plan for Killaloe/Ballina.	DLD/CCC, TCC	2-5
3.1.2	Consider inclusion of a Lough Derg Discovery Point in Killaloe/ Ballina.		
Provide easy ways to be active in nature			
3.1.3	Support a feasibility study for the development of a Greenway between Limerick city and Killaloe/Ballina including integration of Ardnacrusha as a key feature.	TCC/CCC, LCC, TEC, RRO, NTO, C, LDC, WI, CW	1-2
3.1.4	East Clare Way and Lough Derg Way – audit and improve connectivity, safety, accessibility and wayfinding along the existing trail networks on approaches to Killaloe/Ballina – in line with Sport Ireland guidelines.		
3.1.5	Support flagship sporting events to take place at Killaloe/ Ballina (e.g. Quest Lough Derg; events at Clarisford Park).	DLD	
3.1.6	Conduct a feasibility study for a heritage driven water experience (such as a 'steamship'; interpreting the industrial heritage stories of the lake.)	LDTO	5
Promote the proximity of visitor services			
3.1.7	Support local Tourism providers with a digital marketing project (e.g. film piece to highlight town accommodation and food providers).	LDTO	2



Objective 3.2

Inis Cealtra and Connected Destination Villages

Explore Inis Cealtra, a 6th century holy island connected across lake waters to a necklace of historic lakeside villages and harbours.



ACTIONS		LEAD/SUPPORT	YEAR
Support the delivery of the Inis Cealtra Experience			
3.2.1	Support the delivery of the Inis Cealtra (Holy Island) Visitor Experience highlighting its importance as one of the most important ecclesiastical sites in Ireland.	DLD/CCC, OPW, NMS	1-2
3.2.2	Support existing service providers to deliver more 'on water' experiences and encourage additional small enterprise around water transport using existing navigation infrastructure.	WI/NWPS, DRCD	1-5
Improve connectivity for visitors across the lake between Scarriff, Tuamgraney, Mountshannon, Dromineer and Garrykennedy			
3.2.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve sustainable connectivity using off-road and water trails in East Clare, connecting towns and villages. Improve sustainable connectivity using off-road and water trails in Tipperary, connecting towns and villages. 	CCC/TCC C, LDTO, RRO, FI, LDC	2-3
3.2.4	Explore the potential to improve connectivity for visitors between Scarriff/Tuamgraney, Scarriff Harbour, and Reddan's Quay including potential use of Scarriff river for low impact activities.	CCC/WI	2-3
Creation of linked boating/sailing clubs, focused on existing settlements			
3.2.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the enhancement of water based linkages between boat clubs in settlements along Lough Derg, building on the opportunities to develop the visitor experience. Support proposals to enhance Dromineer's role and facilities as a centre for excellence for those looking to learn how to sail and as a location for national and international sailing events. 		
Provide visitor orientation and interpretation			
3.2.6	Support and enhance further the tourist offices/informal visitor information points across the lake including Scarriff/Tuamgraney/Mountshannon/Whitegate/Garrykennedy and Dromineer.	CCC/WI, SCC	3-4
3.2.7	Support a feasibility study for development of Discovery Points at The Lookout, Ogonnelloe, Co Clare and Drumman Harbour, Co Clare.	CCC/LDTO, FI, LDC	3
Enhance Castlelough and Portroe Lookout Point: Amenity Zone / Slow Travel Interchange / Discovery Points			
3.2.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support proposals for amenity zone at Castlelough; enhance the visitor experience with safe swimming/ boating/ canoeing access. Provide enhanced walking links to Castlelough Woods onwards to Ballina/Killaloe (south) and Garrykennedy/Dromineer (north) along the Lough Derg Way. Support a feasibility study to develop a visitor experience at Portroe Lookout Point, Tipperary. 	TCC/LDTO	

Objective 3.3

Portumna Destination Hub

Uncover Irish living history through a connected network of woodland, water and mountain trails, extending from Portumna’s historic core to nearby villages and monastic settlements.

THE PROMISE TO VISITORS

Locally guided insights into lived history, joined up trails through an historic town and its adjacent wetlands nature reserve, safe family cycling and paddling on the lake waters for starters or the experienced, guided fishing on the Shannon, journeys on horseback to ancient spiritual centres, journeys on land and water to nearby leafy villages; Terryglass, Lorrha, Woodford

ACTIONS		LEAD/SUPPORT	YEAR
Establish Portumna as a Destination Hub			
3.3.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commission a Portumna Interpretation Plan to align with the Lough Derg Interpretation Plan and support marketing of Portumna and its nearby villages as a significant cluster of built, natural and nautical heritage sites. Support implementation of relevant recommendations from the Tourism Masterplan for the Shannon Review progress and assess the feasibility of implementing the concept set out in the Lough Derg Road Map 2014–2017 for a shared spatial vision for the state lands to the south of Portumna town including the Forest Park, Castle, Abbey, County Council and Waterways Ireland lands. Position Portumna’s main street to play a new role at the centre of a network of historic routes that extend around the town, to the nearby villages and beyond by providing central visitor information point and working with local businesses to play a visitor facing role. Support upgrade of the Water Recreation Area ‘Swimming Area’ in Portumna. 	DLD/GCC, CTO, WI, FI	1-5
Position Portumna as a key component in a connected network of historic towns and villages – Clonfert, Meelick, Woodford, Terryglass, Lorrha, Borrisokane, Cloughjordan accessible via the Beara Breifne Way/ Shannon and Erne Pilgrim Way			
3.3.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support establishment of Portumna hub dedicated tourism group or initiate strong collaboration with an existing representative group focusing on tourism priorities. Support implementation of the relevant recommendations of the Fáilte Ireland Beara Breifne Way Tourism Masterplan. Support the implementation of the relevant recommendations for Portumna in the Shannon and Erne Pilgrim Way Feasibility Study strengthening linkages between towns and villages with ecclesiastical and spiritual heritage. 	GCC/PCC, WI, C, OPW, IWC, TB, CG, LCD, Galway Heritage Officer and Community Archaeologist, BBW	1-5
Embrace the North West – focus on Woodford, Abbey and the Slieve Aughtys			
3.3.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support collaboration between Local Development Companies, Rural Recreation Officers and local stakeholders in Clare and Galway to explore potential for new walking trails and loops connecting to existing trails in the north west of Lough Derg. Identify Biophonic Zones – map places where only sounds of nature are heard. Support “Headstone and Homestead” opportunities between Woodford and Nenagh Genealogy Centre. 	LCD/RRO, CG, NPWS, CG Woodford / Nenagh Genealogy	1-5

Objective 3.4

Nenagh Gateway Town

A bustling market town steeped in heritage, with a great reputation for food, compelling stories and a great welcome to the Lough Derg region at Nenagh’s Historic Quarter.



ACTIONS		LEAD/SUPPORT	YEAR
Support the preparation, design and development of a historic quarter at Nenagh			
3.4.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve the public realm in the historic quarter and support feasibility studies for a linked up urban space that provides a cluster of heritage and visitor experiences. Develop Nenagh in line with Fáilte Ireland’s ‘Development Guidelines for Tourism Destination Towns’. 	TCC/OPW, FI, NCC, TB, NAC	1-5
Nenagh 800			
3.4.2	Exploit the opportunity to run and promote significant events to raise awareness of the town as a gateway town for Destination Lough Derg and IHH.	TCC/NCC, TB, NAC	1
Review and map Nenagh cycling network			
3.4.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audit existing routes and prepare action plan to improve the current experience. Identify any quieter on-road options or off-road sections that could be developed to improve and broaden the safety and appeal of the network. 	TCC/FI	3-5
Develop the Slí Éala Way			
3.2.4	Assess safety and accessibility of the walking route, enhance interpretation of the Slí Éala Way linking Nenagh with Dromineer and the banks of Lough Derg.	TCC/FI	3-5

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ACTION AREA 4

Destination Marketing

Objective 4.1

Develop a Distinctive Digital Presence

Update and maintain a distinctive Lough Derg digital presence.

ACTIONS		LEAD/ SUPPORT	YEAR
Review Discoverloughderg.ie			
4.1.1	Review, upgrade and further develop discoverloughderg.ie website to fix glitches, streamline content in line with new experience geographic clusters, key themes, stories and experiences unique to the Lough Derg area and carry out regular updates to content.	LDTO/CTO, FI	1-5
4.1.2	Continue to increase social media presence across all platforms.		
4.1.3	Support training for tourism providers to deliver online bookable experiences.		

Objective 4.2

Ensure cohesive communication

Work with national and local bodies to ensure cohesive messaging.

ACTIONS		LEAD/ SUPPORT	YEAR
Communicate the brand essence and appeal of Lough Derg within a national context			
4.2.1	Assess Ireland’s Hidden Heartlands brand architecture and position Lough Derg’s distinctive brand vision in this context.	DLD/FI, TB	1
4.2.2	Align Lough Derg to Destination Experience Themes in the Tourism Masterplan for the Shannon.		
4.2.3	Use the Lough Derg Interpretation Plan as a framework for developing creative marketing briefs (graphic design/ photography, video work etc.)		
4.2.4	Produce and provide the necessary promotional material i.e. video, imagery, clips and testimonials to place the Lough Derg region in a strong position for inclusion in any Fáilte Ireland’s national and international marketing campaigns.	DLD/CTO, FI	1-5
4.2.5	Identify opportunities to work with Tourism Ireland to reach a number of key international markets within Europe.		

Objective 4.3

Partnership

Support marketing actions of tourism businesses.

ACTIONS		LEAD/ SUPPORT	YEAR
4.3.1	Facilitate partnership marketing with local hospitality and tourism businesses through a series of networking events to ensure Destination Lough Derg can reach key target markets with consistent messages in a focused way – refresh annually.	DLD/FI, TB	2-3
4.3.2	Work with tourism providers to develop GDPR compliant database of key industry contacts.		
4.3.3	Identify the tourism and hospitality businesses across the area that could form cluster groups in response to the strategy's development themes with whom Destination Lough Derg can work to bring the experiences they offer to life.		
4.3.4	Work closely with tourism businesses to create an annual mini digital campaign targeted at specific audiences in the home market and in Europe.		

Objective 4.4

Be Market Ready

Work together to create and promote market-ready offers, packages and itineraries.

ACTIONS		LEAD/ SUPPORT	YEAR
Develop market ready experiences and packages			
4.4.1	Facilitate tourism providers to work collaboratively with each other to provide offers of value which are promotable, bookable and easily purchased online at the stage when people are booking their travel arrangements online – focus on saleable experiences that align with destination themes, target markets and trends	DLD/TB, WI	2-5
4.4.2	Continue to build on material bank of photos, videos and presentations, elevator pitches and stories, for use by Destination Lough Derg partners and tourism businesses.		
4.4.3	Consolidate Lough Derg Blueway promotional literature to ensure it meets the needs of the visitor.		

Lough Derg

ACTION PLAN

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Comhairle Contae Thiobraid Árann
Tipperary County Council



COMHAIRLE CONTAE AN CHLÁIR
CLARE COUNTY COUNCIL



Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council



Fáilte Ireland



Inland Fisheries Ireland



TIPPERARY
LCDC

Local Community Development Committee
Comite um Fhorbairt Pobail Aitiúil
Thiobraid Árann



NTDC
North Tipperary
Development Company



Clare Local
Development
Company



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



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

Lough Derg
LAKELANDS