

Developing Leitrim's Tourism Potential 2007 –2013

Draft Paper for Discussion

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1. Introduction

Leitrim as a county is known for its spectacular natural scenery and excellent natural resources facilitating angling, boating, hill walking etc. However, despite these natural resources the county has lagged behind with regards to the development of its tourism sector. This is due partly to difficult access and proximity to the border, issues which not alone have affected Leitrim but other border counties also.

However, in recent years there has been steady progress in this regard, particularly since the development of the Shannon Erne Waterway and the development of a cruising market that is of important significance to the local economy each year. In addition, due to the unprecedented development of the county in the last number of years, Leitrim as a county is experiencing a change in external perceptions, making the county now seen as a vibrant county, well worth a visit. It is important therefore that steps are taken now to ensure that the product development and the marketing of the county reflect this opportunity and that the growing potential of the county as a tourist destination is exploited to the maximum.

It is the policy of Leitrim County Council to promote the development of an environmentally friendly tourism industry that minimizes negative impacts on the environment and maximizes the social and economic benefits of the county. The Council recognizes that recreational activities such as angling, hill walking, pony trekking and cycling can have a very minimal impact on the environment while contributing significantly to the economy of the county. The Council also encourages theme holiday activities such as festivals, music events, outdoor pursuits etc.

Since the preparation of the Leitrim County Development Plan (2003-2009), there is now implemented a revised regional tourism structure for the establishment of Failte Ireland regional offices throughout the country. Leitrim continues to be part of the northwest region and is facilitated by the Failte Ireland North West office. Through the reform of regional tourism structures the Regional Tourism office is now wholly focused on the development of the north west as a tourist destination and this, coupled with the Failte Ireland Tourism Product Development Strategy 2007-2013 provides unique opportunities for the development of close working relationships between the Local Authority and the Regional Tourism organisation for the further development of tourism in the county.

In addition to opportunities made available by this new partnership, the Council has also taken significant steps over the last number of years to position the county in a much stronger tourism stand. This work saw the delivery of important infrastructure such as the Carrick on Shannon-on-Shannon riverside amenity, expanded mooring facilities in Carrick on Shannon-on-Shannon, development of a new leisure centre and arts centre, the enhancement of towns and villages, maximising the urban and village renewal programme up to 2006, important improvements in the road network within the county, significant expansion of playgrounds and continuing efforts to put in place other projects of importance in this area. The county was also in a position to secure important investment through the Peace and Interreg programmes to the period ending 2006, which has facilitated some key developments in the county including an ongoing sustained marketing initiative and other investments enhancing the appearance of our towns and villages.

The Council is fully supportive of all future developments that will contribute positively to the tourism potential of the county, while protecting the heritage and environment of the county, so as to achieve maximum economic and social gain.

It is therefore in accordance with the policy and objectives of Leitrim County Council to become actively engaged in the promoting, encouraging and partnering the development of new and enhanced tourism product facilities within the county.

This report identifies areas and potential actions that when carried out directly by the Council or in partnership with other stakeholders and agencies, should contribute towards the potential of the county as a tourist destination. In tandem with the proposals set out, the Council also recognises the importance of tourism marketing and is therefore fully supportive of the efforts of Leitrim Tourism in the marketing of Leitrim as a tourist destination and in the continuing co-operation between Leitrim Tourism and other relevant and appropriate agencies for the marketing of the county as a tourist destination.

This report was compiled using information from a range of sources:

- Submission from individuals and organisations as a result of public advertising by Leitrim County Council
- Desk top research
- Gathering and examining a range of county, regional and national strategic documents
- A series of discussions with stakeholders

The report is structured for ease of reading and has a number of sections:

Section 1 - Introduction

Section 2 - Context of Tourism Development

Provides a sense of the strategic documents that inform this report as well as key findings from Failte Ireland's Tourism Product Development Strategy 2007 –2012.

Section 3 - The Leitrim Experience

A short overview of what currently exists for visitors under the Failte Ireland product themes. There is also an overview of some of the challenges faced in Leitrim – these will be expanded in Section 6.

Section 4 - County, Regional & National Stakeholders

This section provides as list of all the main stakeholders involved either directly or indirectly with tourism development that will impact on Leitrim. The core process of partnership and collaboration between stakeholders is detailed in Section 7.

Section 5 - Principles underpinning Leitrim Tourism Development

All good practice must be underpinned by a foundation of principles. The 8 principles detailed in this section will affect planning, action and evaluation of all tourism products development in Leitrim.

Section 6 - Tourism Product Themes & Experiences

This is a key section. It identifies the challenges and recommendations for tourism product development in Leitrim under a series of themed headings developed by Failte Ireland.

Section 7 - Partnership & Collaboration

The realisation and success of the plans detailed in this report will be critically dependent on the quality of the collaboration between a range of partners.

Section 8 - Communication & Engagement

If the tourism product developments are to be innovative and sustainable then a clear and multi faceted communication and engagement strategy needs to be developed both between key partners but also in communities and for tourism enterprises.

2. Context for Tourism Development

Tourism development does not operate in a vacuum.

It will be influenced and formed by national, regional and county strategies and plans. A range of strategic reports at national and county level have been developed in recent years. They encompass a range of elements that will impact on tourism development in County Leitrim and a few examples are listed below:

Tourism specific plans and research - Failte Ireland – Tourism Product Development Strategy 2007 – 2013; Failte Ireland North West Tourism Product Development Strategy 2007 – 2013.

County Plans - A Shared Vision – Social, Economic and Cultural Strategy for Co. Leitrim 2002 – 2012; Leitrim County Development Plan 2003-2009;

National and County Heritage plans – Leitrim Heritage Plan; National Heritage Plan; National Inventory of Architectural Heritage; National Biodiversity Plan; National Strategy for Sustainable Development; Landscape Character Assessment (Co. Leitrim).

National strategy plans with tourism elements – Environmental Protection Authority State of the Environment Report; Coillte;

The Failte Ireland Tourism Product Development Strategy 2007 – 2013 - provides a wide ranging, thoughtful and strategic focus for the future development of tourism products in Ireland. Here are a few key excerpts that paint a challenging picture for Ireland and our County.

In her opening address to the strategic report, Gillian Bowler (Chair, Failte Ireland) stated that:

... There are trends emerging which should cause us to guard against complacency ... the Regions outside Dublin have seen very limited growth in incoming tourism... many of our products, particularly in rural areas, have had difficulty in increasing customer numbers.

Irish tourism must invest for success ... it is essential that the wider tourism product continues to innovate and improve in order that we attract significant numbers to endure longer term sustainability of the sector ... Ireland's competitors have not stood still.' (i,ii)

In an audit of product ratings (i.e. counties with low, medium, high tourism product inventory) across all counties, Leitrim was in the bottom 6.

This is both a challenge and an opportunity for innovation and the aim of this report is to bring together many ideas for future development under the Failte Ireland tourism product themes.

Leitrim's overarching tourism goal – To support and develop a range of quality tourism products/initiatives and build our strengths across all themed areas. To grow a diverse portfolio of offerings for our visitors that provides a great experience and supports, in a sustainable way, our communities.

3. The Leitrim Experience

Leitrim remains unspoilt, a haven from the stresses and strains of modern urban living. With an area of 589 square miles (1525 square km) and surrounded by six counties, it makes an ideal base for touring a wide variety of landscapes and other counties. Leitrim contains everything a person could wish for; not just a huge range of natural charms and amenities, but also its superb traditional music and warmth of the people.

The lowest populated county in Ireland with just fewer than 29,000 people living here. Back in the 1850's Leitrim's population was 150,000 which had been decreasing each year due to huge emigrations to countries like the USA, Australia, Canada and New Zealand but for the first time in years, the census of 2002 showed that the Leitrim population increased. More and more people are choosing Leitrim as a place to live mainly for the improved quality of life Leitrim has to offer.

It is mainly this authentic rural experience that attracts visitors to Leitrim, in particular the overseas visitors who want to experience Ireland as it was or to get away from the hustle and bustle of city life.

Leitrim's main overseas visitor comes from Mainland Europe for a variety of reasons mainly activity such as cruising, angling, cycling or walking. The USA market is increasing with large numbers of visitors visiting in search of their roots some as far back as 6th generation, and others who want something different from Ireland than the commercial tourist areas that they have previously visited.

The UK and Domestic Visitor is Leitrim's main Market attracting visitors for short breaks, cruising holidays and activity.

Leitrim's tourism product was predominantly angling for many years with large amounts of anglers coming from UK and mainland Europe each year, but our product has now diversified with new and improved activities and products coming on board.

The Visitor of today has changed, their requirements are different higher standards are required and also people are now more environment friendly therefore Leitrim has an advantage over other counties with rural authenticity remaining. There is a growing sector looking for the "Green experience" which Leitrim can offer from EU Ecoflower, (European Eco-Label for Tourist Accommodation) to Organic food.

Some Trend Forecasts

In the Failte Ireland report (2007) they identified that:

- ❑ **Great Britain** visitors will be the biggest and fastest growing market for rural and touring holidays.
- ❑ **North American** visitors had a strong demand for tours, cruises and nice specific packages such as culture and heritage.
- ❑ **Mainland European** visitors had a strong demand for touring and wellness packages.
- ❑ Great Britain is our biggest market but are lower spenders than the US market – although they will visit more frequently.
- ❑ The biggest driver for growth in the future will be the ageing mainland European population.

Changing Consumer Profiles

(Referenced from a range of Failte Ireland publications on their website)

- By 2020 the 35-54 and 55+ visitor market will represent **70%** of overseas visitors to Ireland.
- By 2020 it's predicted that EU mainland outbound visitors in the 35-54 and 55+ age groups will represent 36% each (**total 72%**) of all outbound travellers. Currently Ireland attracts 34% of 35-54 year olds and **only 8%** of 55+. We attract 58% of the 15-34 age group – and in 2020 they will only represent 28% of outbound travellers.
- Older travellers are time and cash rich. They have a desire for customised experiences; they travel mid week and for non standard trip lengths; many of them will hire or bring a car. The availability of good health facilities is important. **Well being and value systems such as sustainability and the environment will influence the travelling and destination decisions of the market. Older travellers will demand a quality experience.**
- Wellness experiences for older visitors will be in increasing demand as the need to retain a sense of youth, fitness and vitality is important. Accommodation needs will move from budget to midrange and 1st class. Self catering will need to provide an authentic/local and or eco dimension.
- People want clear, accessible and interesting information. People are a lot more visually literate. Good signposting for the self tourer is a must as is multi lingual information and excellent e marketing and online booking capacity.
- The 2004 IPK World Travel Monitor Forecast maintained that the trend for shorter trips (1-3 nights) would continue in the immediate short term but it was expected to slow as a result of growth in medium length stays of 4 –7 nights.
- 74% of all overseas visitors to Ireland will hire or bring a car.
- Cultural & historical activities are the most popular activities for people visiting Ireland.
- When visitors come to Ireland the Northwest of Ireland is not on the top of the list for travel – although visitors will travel to more than 1 county during their stay.

The visitor experience

The Failte Ireland report identified a range of consumer needs and the kinds of experiences they wanted:

Authenticity
Satisfaction
Rejuvenation
Relaxation & serenity
Belonging – socialising, fun & bonding
Self actualisation and feeling mentally stimulated & knowledgeable

Energising and feeling vital & alive
Freedom
Safety
Discovery
Connection to a simpler and slower way of life
Learn about local traditions and history

Opportunities & Challenges for Leitrim

This is a quick list and the rest of the report tackles the challenges and draws on the opportunities:

Opportunities

Access from major cities is within 2 hours; unspoilt landscape; uncrowded hills; challenging cycle routes; riverside golf courses; unique attractions; steeped in history; lakeside equestrian; anglers paradise; developing tourist destination; cross border funding; good networking and partnerships; friendly people; organic and sustainable initiatives; walking and cycling trails; festivals; clean air; quality accommodation; on main Dublin/Sligo train route; new flights into Knock Airport from Boston and New York; increase in private cruisers; only 2 hours from Dublin;

Challenges

Lack of all weather tourist attractions; inadequate access for bus coaching tours; accommodation in North Leitrim; scarce or lack of caravan or camping facilities; need for capital investment in heritage buildings and monuments; public transport within county weak; lack of conference facilities; access to certain attractions

Leitrim has the opportunity to draw on its many resources and continue to create an authentic and sustainable destination for visitors. It has so many features that visitors want to experience – they can go home ... energised, relaxed, happy, ... and with many stories to tell their friends and family.

♥ **Leitrim ... Relax into it.**

4. County, Regional & National Stakeholders

There are a range of county, regional and national stakeholders that have either a direct or indirect interest and influence on tourism development in Leitrim.

They all need to be included in some way in the planning, development, resourcing and evaluation of tourism initiatives in Leitrim. It is important to note that a number of these organisations are already involved in positive and productive partnerships with each other.

The nature, scale and extent of partnerships, collaboration, communication and engagement will be explored in more detail in section 7 and 8.

Tourism Specific Organisations

Leitrim Tourism
Rural Tourism Skills Development Organisations
Failte Ireland North West
Tourism Trade Providers
Private Tourism Enterprises
Local Tourism Committees
Greenbox
Breifne
Tourist Information Centres
Failte Ireland
National Tourism Strategy
Implementation Group
National Product Tourism
Development Review Group

Development Organisations

Leitrim County Council
Western Development Commission
Arigna Leader
Leitrim County Enterprise Board
Leitrim County Development Board
County Leitrim Partnership
Local Community Development Organisations
Irish Farmers Association

Heritage and Natural Environment Organisations

Waterways Ireland
Fisheries Boards – Shannon North
West and Northern Fisheries Board
Heritage Council
Dept of the Environment
Environmental Protection Authority
Coiltte
Teagasc

Funders (other than tourism)

Irish Government (NDP)
Local Government
Leader Programme
Interreg IV,
International Fund for Ireland
Peace Programme

National Government Departments with some form of Tourism responsibility.

Dept. Arts, Sport & Tourism
Dept. of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government
Dept. Of Transport
Dept. Agriculture & Food
Dept. of Finance
Dept. of Communications, Marine & Natural Resources
Dept. of Community, Rural & Gaeltacht Affairs
The Office of Public Works

5. Principles underpinning Leitrim Tourism Development

The **8 Principles of Good Practice** detailed below should drive any tourism development plans – and their evaluations for real results. They will underpin all good practice and make a significant contribution to the quality of life for residents of the county as well as visitors.

Principle 1 – Sustainable Tourism environment+ community+ economy
Principle 2 - A Quality Experience for visitors & communities
Principle 3 - Integrity & Authenticity of the people, places, & stories of Leitrim
Principle 4 - Partnership & Collaboration between key tourism & development agencies
Principle 5 - Communication & Engagement with partners, tourism enterprises & community
Principle 6 –Tourism & Local Development developing ways to link tourism product developments with local business development
Principle 7 - High standards in development & delivery of tourism products
Principle 8 –Results monitor, reflect & evaluate progress

Principle 1 - Sustainable Tourism – Environment + Community + Economy

The world's tourism industry leaders recognise that tourism, like any industry, can have environmental (economic & social) impacts and have instilled sustainability as a key goal for the industry.

Local Government, through the provision of infrastructure and services, often used by visitors as well as residents, has an important role to play in helping the tourism industry attain this goal. The adoption of a sustainability framework in Council practice: from essential services, such as waste management, to higher level strategic direction, eg. planning policy that supports sustainable tourism development, can make a significant difference to the localised impacts of tourism.

A mutually beneficial alliance can be achieved between the economics of tourism and conservation. That is, through understanding and enjoyment comes greater appreciation and empathy, advocacy and protection for the resource. (South Australian Tourism Commission. Local Government's Engagement with Tourism. 2006)

Various definitions of sustainable tourism have been promulgated by tourism organisations and institutions, some of which portrayed it as a niche segment within the overall tourism market— mistakenly confusing it with ecotourism.

Sustainable tourism is based on principles for sustainable development, and is simply defined by the World Tourism Organisation (WTO) as tourism that:
"meets the present needs of tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunities for the future. It is envisaged as leading to management of all resources in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life support systems." (World Tourism Organisation, 2003)

Principle 2 - A Quality Experience for Visitors & Communities

What is a quality experience?

For a visitor to leave and feel like they have had a quality experience a range of elements need to be in place, including:

- A range of accommodation options
- Clear and accessible information
- Access to sites of interest while maintaining the aesthetic integrity of spaces
- Quality physical infrastructure including transport access routes
- An opportunity to meet local people
- Quality services linked to reasonable prices
- Many packages, activities and experience opportunities to suit the range of economic and time constraints of visitors

The **aesthetic (beauty)** of an experience in a place cannot always be quantified but people know when they have experienced it. It can be the sight, sound, taste and touch of an event, a place, a conversation, a piece of music, how we are welcomed. The aesthetic has to do with how we create beautiful access to our natural environment; how we landscape a carpark; maintain the original frontage of streetscapes; maintain Irish and English signage; provide quality food; maintain hedgerows.

The South Australian Tourism Commission's 2006 report on Local Government's engagement in tourism supported this principle when it stated:

'Good design respects the resource, achieves conservation outcomes, reflects community values, and is instrumental in telling the story. It should also invoke an emotional response from the visitor by creating a relatively authentic experience... Tourism is primarily encouraged as an economic and community development tool. It is not encouraged for its own sake. For tourism to be successful, it must take into account the benefits that both the host community and the visitor seek. Only when the local community is a willing host is tourism likely to present a welcoming face, grow and be sustainable.'

Visitors want to return home with good news stories of their stay in Leitrim and every element of tourism delivery will impact on the stories they tell about their experience.

Principle 3 - Hold to the integrity & authenticity of the People, Places, & Stories of Leitrim

More and more we see that visitors want an authentic experience of an area. They want to feel that they are somehow engaging with locals and getting a sense of the history, culture and environment of Leitrim.

They want to hear the stories and music of the area – see the monuments and heritage – and experience the quiet beauty of Leitrim's lakes, rivers, forests, flora, fauna and mountains.

'The attractions most likely to be successful, and those with the greatest enduring appeal, are those which are genuinely relevant to the history, industry, culture lifestyle and natural resources of the region. The most effective way to ensure authenticity is to understand, conserve and enhance the values of the community. This means representing the past, present and future aspirations of the local community in a living and dynamic way, rather than 'embalming' the past.' (p12. SA Tourism Commission Report. 2006)

Visitors want to go home feeling like they have experienced something different from where they live.

This value (as with all the others) is key to tourism product developments in Leitrim. We must draw on our strengths as a County and ensure that developments link to this value. People want integrity and authenticity.

Principle 4 - Partnership & Collaboration between key tourism and development agencies

The resources (time, people, money, ideas, physical infrastructure) to develop and maintain tourism developments will be substantial and cannot be the sole responsibility of any one organisation.

Leitrim has a number of excellent Tourism and Development structures, networks and organisations that have been working in tandem to plan tourism both in the county and across counties.

This principle of good practice will be explored in more detail in section 6.

Principle 5 - Communication & Engagement with Partners, Tourism Enterprises and Community

If principles of local development and sustainability are to be realised then clear communication and engagement processes with partners, businesses and community must be developed and utilised.

This may occur through existing structures as well as the development of new communication channels and opportunities. This is explored in more detail in section 7.

Principle 6 - Highlight the importance of developing ways to link tourism product developments with local business development

This principle is clearly linked to Principle 1 on Sustainable Tourism.

It is important that any tourism development encompasses both small local tourism initiatives as well as large scale ventures such as hotels and activity centres.

Many towns in Leitrim cannot rely on large industrial or economic initiatives for their livelihoods. Tourism initiatives provide a feasible economic alternative to small businesses such as pubs, restaurants, taxi drivers and B&B's. These people will look to tourism product initiatives such as festivals, tour operating and many of the products detailed in this report – to provide them with a small to medium alternative income stream.

Principle 7 - High standards in development & delivery of tourism products

All these Principles are about quality standards.

It is important that all the key partners in developing Leitrim tourism initiatives continue to clarify what is meant by quality standards across the board – from the quality of information materials and distribution channels, to the quality of access to lakes and rivers.

They need to develop written and agreed standards of practice (linked to these 8 principles) against which they can access, fund and even award tourism initiatives.

This principle would also include the development and delivery of learning and support opportunities for the tourism workforce and enterprises.

Visitors expect and deserve quality standards to ensure a quality experience.

Principle 8 –Results - Monitor, Reflect & Evaluate progress

A framework for monitoring and assessing the impact of tourism initiatives against the 8 principles needs to be developed. There is a range of literature that can inform the development of this framework.

Resources will need to be allocated to develop clear, useful and practical evaluation and assessment frameworks.

Basically, we all want to know if we achieved what we set out to do, how well we did it – and – how we can continue to improve the offerings to visitors.

6. Tourism Product Themes & Experiences

6.1 Introduction

This section will detail tourism product plans for the next 3 to 6 years in Leitrim County.

The tourism product headings are directly related to Failte Irelands product plan focus detailed in their 2007 Tourism Product Development Strategy and are underpinned by the principles stated in the previous section.

There are a number of **interlinked elements of product development** that require a strategic planning focus under all the themes:

Physical Infrastructure such as access to walks, forests, water etc.

Critical transport linkages from airports and major tourism attractor points need to be developed in order to create ease of entry and exit to Leitrim – as well as internal transport links within the county. This encompasses – air, roads and water transport links.

Research & Feasibility Studies will form an integral part of the development of a cohesive and linked tourism development strategy for Leitrim County. This report contains many positive proposals that will require further research and feasibility analysis before they can become a reality. All research will include core stakeholders and partners and will be relevant, practical, timely and actionable.

Information and Communication products that will inform and entice people to visit Leitrim need to continue to be developed as a result of the initiatives detailed in this report. A range of linked information distribution strategies will also need to be developed as part of the overall county tourism marketing strategy. That is, ensuring that all information and communication is available through multiple channels (i.e online, multiple media, trade fairs, tourist information centres; libraries; local shops etc) at local, regional, national and international levels.

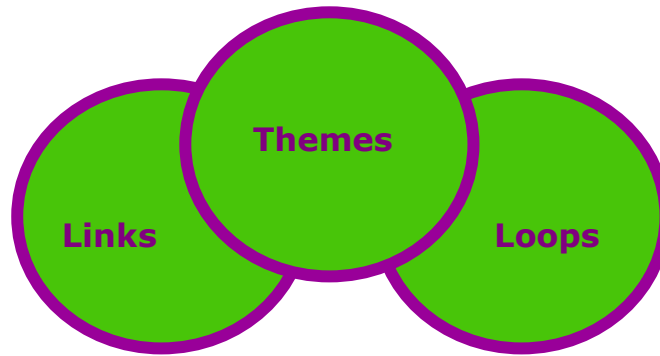
Tourism Product Packages need to be developed so that visitors are presented with a range of experience opportunities. These can be themed, linked and/or looped (as described on the next page). This report contains a wide range of ideas for development.

Training, Support & Development opportunities need to be developed for tourism related businesses to develop their capacity in order to ensure that visitors are presented with a quality and value driven experiences.

These different elements will be the responsibility of a range of organisations working in partnership. In most cases one organisation e.g Leitrim County Council or Leitrim Tourism will be the lead partner working in cooperation with other partners to plan, develop and monitor initiatives. Partnerships and key stakeholders are explored in more detail in sections 4 and 7.

Leitrim County Council's role as lead agency of the County Development Board provides an efficient and effective means of developing the required partnerships for the delivery of this strategy.

Product Packages can be developed within the following framework:



THEMES – The 8 tourism product development themes (detailed on the next page) developed by Failte Ireland provide the core focus of this report.

LINKS - The subthemes detailed below could be the linkage points across the main themes.

- ❑ **Special People** – Leitrim has any number of special people who have lived here. John McGahern or Anthony Trollope immediately comes to mind. A summer school for John Mc Gahern is being developed and that will draw people to the area for a specific time. There is also a need to develop information and signage so that a visitor can take their own Anthony Trollope Tour of the lakes and places from his books. There are also existing and popular festivals or places associated with special Leitrim people - eg Joe Mooney Summer School, Sean MacDiarmada, John McKenna Traditional Society. Robert Strawbridge, Surgeon Major Thomas Heazle Parke.
- ❑ **Learn About** – creating packages for people who want to learn or already have a hobby – learn about – organics, angling, woodcarving, glass making, local history, Irish language, cooking, flora & fauna, arts and crafts ... all linked to tours and accommodation.
- ❑ **Go See** – is another theme that would link visitors into the local area. **Go See** – a game of Irish football, birds migrating, musicians playing, an exhibition, a small monastery island, craft in artist workshops.
- ❑ **Go Play** – music, dance, restaurants, spas, places for families and children, etc.
- ❑ **Go Do & Be**– all sorts of activities including soft adventure and wellness and angling summer camps.

Linkages also involve creating linkages between products and accommodation and major events such as festivals that may be happening in Leitrim.

LOOPS– This really focuses on exploring and creating loops of travel and experiences that visitors can do. If they are visiting one area/village then we need to develop travel loops of interest that could also be linked to product Themes and Linkages. For example, if people are visiting Leitrim to see monuments (**Heritage**) then let's create information, opportunities and packages that will stimulate them to travel around Leitrim to visit monuments and a heritage festival. One excellent existing example of a Looped Tourism Package is the Greenbox coordinated Wildflower Cycling Holidays (**Soft Adventure and Wellness**). They provide information on cycling routes as well as an accommodation booking facility along the visitors chosen route. Another example of a potential Looped (& Linked) Tourism Package would be a North Leitrim Heritage package that could include information, stories and tours of such places and people as Black Pigs Dyke, Sean McDiarmada and Prince Conall's grave.

Tourism Product Themes from Failte Ireland

The themes below were developed by Failte Ireland and form the core of this Leitrim Tourism Product Development Plan. The Themes are intertwined with the concepts of Linking and Looping and are underpinned by the 8 Principles detailed in a previous section:



6.2 Rural Culture

A walk in the park ... glimpses of swans through the reeds on a lake ... towns that have Irish & English signs ... slow down behind the tractor ... and you can still get a cappuccino

Leitrim can provide many authentic experiences of rural culture. Principle 3 – Integrity & Authenticity is particularly relevant here.

Development Recommendations

Physical Infrastructure

Pursue the further development of existing attractions within the county that have the potential to contribute to the goal of larger visitors numbers, including Glencar Waterfall, Parkes Castle.

Establish the potential for value added to the establishment of a cluster of significant attractions coming from those detailed above in Leitrim and including neighbouring attractions, such as developments at Lough Key Forest and Leisure Park, Arigna Mining experience, Strokestown House and Marble Arch Caves, Fermanagh.

Research & Feasibility Studies

Determine a priority list for the flagship product area concentrating on initiatives in the incubation phase, such as Mohill/Dromod railway line, Ballroom of Romance, Glenfarne.

Information & Communication packages

Develop relevant information and communication packages (with multi faceted distribution channels) as new initiatives come to fruition. All packages will be designed using the new visual branding design criteria.

Develop written policy on new package design criteria.

Tourism Product Packages

Develop Linked & Looped packages that connect cluster attractions.

Training, Support & Development

Develop a training and product development package for taxi and minibus owners that enables them to provide a range of different rural culture experiences in their areas. These people often have a wealth of local knowledge and tell great stories - they know their area back to front) e.g. music wandering; a tour of history with a stop for coffee; a mystery wander; stories and people of the area etc. People coming off the boats may not have access to a car and would enjoy a 2 to 4 hour **Wander Around Tour**. Interested businesses would take part in a training/development process that would enable them to collectively develop (under the Leitrim brand) a series of packages with promotion and pricing bundles. They would be provided with information packages and as an assessment they would take a number of people on a local tour. Successful 'recruits' would receive a **Wander Around Tour Operator** sticker as accreditation. This could also be developed for walking and cycling.

Develop a network of attractions and provide training and supports to develop awareness and knowledge of other similar themed products in the county - which will contribute to an enhanced customer service and referral service between attractions which will both grow business and improve the visitor experience.

6.3 Gastronomy

Boxty on the griddle,
Boxty in the pan,
If you can't make boxty,
You'll never get a man

Leitrim may not be renowned for its gastronomy (although we do have some fine eating establishments) but we're working on being the Organic Capital of Ireland. Principle 1 - Sustainable Tourism – is particularly relevant here.

Western Organic Network, the Food Hub in Drumshanbo, developing Farmers Markets, the potential Food Festival in Drumshanbo, and of course, the Organics Centre in Rossinver are a very good start to our bid for Organics Capital status.

It is vital that we maximise the potential of organics as an important niche market opportunity for Leitrim and as potential synergies with health farms etc., as flagship projects.

This is a developing area of tourism in Leitrim and many ideas would be aspirational and in the research/feasibility stages of development. That is why it will be important in 2007 and 2008 to explore with all relevant partners the potential tourism developments and service offerings that could be realised for visitors and communities.

Development Recommendations

Physical Infrastructure

Physical and capital works plans will be developed as a result of the 07/08 round table discussions with the sector and development partners.

Research & Feasibility Studies

Leitrim County Council working through Leitrim County Development Board member organisations (and other relevant bodies) will work with the food sector/tourism providers such the Food Hub, Western Organic Network, Rossinver Organic Centre, Green Box (and any other relevant groups) to explore development ideas regarding niche food tourism. As a first step we will convene a 3 hour round table discussion in 2007/08.

Information & Communication packages

Develop a Food Circle Guide that includes gourmet and organic outlets, farmers markets, information

Tourism Product Packages

Packages will be developed after initial round table discussions between relevant partners in the sector.

Training, Support & Development

Training, support and development needs and services will be developed as a result of the 07/08 round table discussions and resulting product development packages.

6.4 Wellness

Leitrim is a place where you can feel well ... slow down ... take some time for yourself ... relax into it

You can see the stars in the sky on a clear night ... the air is clean ... you can loll away a day or wander along quiet paths to your hearts content ... relax into it

Visit Ard Nahoo a health farm with a difference ...transformative days of rest, relaxation & pampering ... relax into it

Leitrim has a number of health and wellness facilities including Ard Nahoo, Ramada Hotel Lough Allen, Aura Leisure Centre and the soon to be opened Spa in Lough Rynn which are a welcome addition to the Wellness Package for visitors.

Wellness is more than the spas and health centres – it's about the relaxed and invigorating experience visitors feel when they come here. The quality of living they experience no matter how long their stay. Principle 2 - A Quality Experience – is particularly relevant here.

A lot of the suggestions under the Soft Adventure and Heritage Themes could be effectively linked and looped with this theme.

Development Recommendations

Physical Infrastructure

Physical and capital works plans will be developed as a result of the 07/08 round table discussions with the sector and development partners

Research & Feasibility Studies

Leitrim County Council working through Leitrim County Development Board member organisations (and other relevant bodies) will host a 2 to 3 hour initial round table discussion in 2007/08 with ArdNahoo, any hotel spas, and other wellness enterprises to explore development ideas regarding niche wellness tourism.

Information & Communication packages

Develop relevant information and communication packages (with multi faceted distribution channels) as new initiatives come to fruition. All packages will be designed using the new visual branding design criteria.

Explore potential to develop a Wellness Guide to Leitrim that details the available wellness/health centres/ health food shops/ body and beauty treatment businesses & alternative health options as well as doctors, dentists, physiotherapists etc

Tourism Product Packages

Packages will be developed after initial round table discussions between relevant partners in the sector.

Training, Support & Development

Training, support and development needs and services will be developed as a result of the 07/08 round table discussions and resulting product development packages.

6.5 Soft Adventure

County Leitrim may only have 4km of coastline, but it's all quality! The Drowse River has an excellent reef break for experienced surfers.

Leitrim is heaven for fishing enthusiasts. Glencar Lake is a real beauty; stunning scenery and easy access to lakeshore.

Pack a picnic, walking boots and a good book and explore the many walking trails and forests available in Leitrim. This must be one the cheapest and most enjoyable days out!

The children are happy lying under the big oak trees, watching the industrious birds in their nests. A great place for the family.

White water fun. Relax into the gentle rhythm of paddling across Lough Allen or take up the pace with Grade 3 canoeing on Bonnet River. A few challenging rapids will wipe away the cobwebs and invigorate experienced canoers.

Many of the Soft Adventure ideas can be:

Linked Together – e.g a walking and kayaking package

Linked to other Themes – wildflower cycling holidays promoted by Greenbox; heritage information and tours for people boating the Shannon/Erne waterways.

Looped – along and around Leitrim's geography – roads, water, walkways...

Angling

In general, Leitrim County Council plan to support a more co-ordinated approach among key stakeholders and relevant agencies for the development of the angling tourism product. There are a number of relevant actions that can be taken over the next 6 years:

Development Recommendations

Physical Infrastructure

Identify a priority list of angling areas for new infrastructure developments including parking facilities, access and fishing stands, and disability friendly as standard.

Through consultation with regional tourism and fisheries bodies, put in place a programme to secure the improvements to a minimum of three locations on a annual basis.

Research & Feasibility Studies

Using information from fish stock assessments on the Shannon and knowledge of local fishing groups establish the locations of the greatest need for investment in order to provide an enhanced product in the areas of demand.

Continue to assess levels of eutrophication in order to protect fish stocks in line with the EU Water Framework Directive.

Establish the availability and need for the required facilities for anglers e.g. storage, drying facilities etc. Establish the feasibility of the increase of these facilities at the targeted angling locations in the county.

Establish the other needs and alternative visitor requirements of the visiting angler in today's market and seek to address these issues with a view to the provision of an all encompassing angling visitor experience for the county.

Information & Communication packages

Review existing information and communication packages and develop under the new visual branding guidelines.

Tourism Product Packages

Support the development of Cross Border Events i.e. Pike angling Border challenge which is due to take place in Feb 08 this event has resulted from a cross border project between counties Fermanagh and Leitrim. The event will be targeted at the overseas and domestic angler.

Encourage the development of Children's Angling Summer Camps, Angling Team Building packages.

Training, Support & Development

Development of an Angling Training Centre for children and adults in an existing accommodation site.

Golfing

It was noted in the 2007 Failte Ireland report that:

'only 1/3 of golf courses are easily available and accessible to visitors ... and internet online booking is not widely available.' (p36)

Development Recommendations

Support and encourage the development of a comprehensive golfing product in Leitrim to coincide with the establishment of the new golfing courses at Lough Rynn, Dromod etc. and forge linkages on a themed basis eg Nick Faldo designed courses in Leitrim and Fermanagh.

Pursue the development of new Golf Classics either in the County or on a cross border basis.

Equestrian

The Failte Ireland report stated that:

'there is considerable opportunity to develop this product and to create and image of 'Ireland the Land of the Horse.' The equestrian product offered could also be widened to outside horse riding schools to include race meetings, trails and other horse related activities.' (p37)

Development Recommendations

Research the potential opportunities and challenges to develop this product.

Walking and Cycling

Slowly or quickly ... on the flats or up a hill ... it's all going just fine.

An hour ... a day ... just wandering the miles away ... relax into it.

Leitrim has some excellent walks and cycle routes for the beginner to the expert. There are also a number of organisations and networks (e.g. **Leitrim Roscommon Walks Network**) working together to further develop both walk and cycle ways.

The Greenbox Wildflower Cycling Holidays initiative is an excellent example of Linking and Looping under this theme. They provide information as well as accommodation advice along the route you choose to take.

Development Recommendations

Physical Infrastructure

Kingfisher Trail – finish developing the loop.

Review maintenance and upgrading of the Way Marked Ways within the county and the updating of guided routes of these trails.

Work with key partners to assess and resolve issues of public access to potential walk and cycle ways.

Do an access audit and plan for walkways and cycling with the relevant partners.

Research & Feasibility Studies

Explore potential for developing a group insurance scheme for businesses that hire bikes in order to expand the numbers of areas that provide this service.

Information & Communication packages

Review existing information and communication packages and develop under the new visual branding guidelines.

Explore the potential to develop information packages that linked walking/cycling with other themes such as Heritage.

Tourism Product Packages

Support and encourage the development of ancillary services to cater for the requirements of the walking and cycling tourist – from novice to expert.

Waterways/Lakes & Forests Development

Wander along the banks ... look out from your boat deck ... sit and enjoy the peace ... relax into it

Learn about the flora and fauna ... just sit and lean against a tree ... try your hand at a little kayaking ... or get the adrenal going in some white water

Our water, air and land are precious and while we need to develop activities for visitors we also must protect them for our future.

We need to consider how sensitive land and lake scapes can accommodate visitors without spoiling the attractiveness of the ecosystems.

Development Recommendations

Physical Infrastructure

Support and actively pursue the extension of navigation further in the county including Lough Rynn, Drumsna and Lough Allen.

Further develop facilities for inland cruising visitors.

Support the Carrick on Shannon Rowing Club, Ireland's oldest rowing club dating back to 1827.

Research & Feasibility Studies

In order to maximise the potential of scenic resources, such as Lough Allen and Lough Melvin, support the preparation of feasibility study/catchment plan for these areas which will assist in identifying the potential that these important natural resources can bring to the tourism market of the county.

Research areas on lakes and in forests that need to be zoned as either soft activity (walking, swimming, kayaking) or hard activity (quad bikes or motorboats) for both safety, recreational and environmental purposes.

Identify possible areas in Leitrim that are or could be designated as - special conservation for habitats and species; special protection areas for birds; natural heritage areas; and any scenic landscapes that need special protection.

Research the feasibility of developing a range of waterways events and competitions.

Information & Communication packages

Review existing information and communication packages and develop under the new visual branding guidelines.

Tourism Product Packages

Explore expansion of watersports as a tourism attraction. Need to define what we mean by watersports and ensure that they are linked with the core principles of sustainability and authenticity.

Develop the existing Carrick on Shannon Regatta one of the longest running regattas in Ireland.

Explore potential for development of wildlife, flora and fauna packages.

Training, Support & Development

Develop any relevant programmes as a result of new initiatives.

6.6 Culture & Celebration

Leitrim is a county that is full of authentic cultural experiences.

It is a county rich in the art, words, music, song, film, drama and movement of its people.

In the 2007 Failte Ireland report they stated under the heading ' Arts & Events' that:

' When tourism is broken down into themes, 'Arts and Events' is the second largest product. There is a considerable disparity between the number of products on offer in different areas. Coastal areas have more products in this group than those inland...Festivals received the highest ratings under this theme while Museums received the lowest ... most are small with dated and poorly presented displays.'(p32)

So there's the challenge. To develop and sustain both the cultural physical infrastructure and the range of events required to attract visitors – while also – adhering to principles of Authenticity, Integrity and Quality Experiences and Standards.

Development Recommendations

Physical Infrastructure

Events space - It is proposed to develop the area around the quay in Carrick on Shannon, which is presently a car park, to an events space which will include a paved area, landscaping, provision for audio equipment, and a band stand area. This area will attract specific arts and water sports activities, which will link both the Leitrim and Fermanagh Arts Centre's and also the Shannon Erne system.

Pursue concepts of the development of open-air event squares in Carrick on Shannon (at the Dock) and Manorhamilton as a new method of providing family events and showcasing local and invited talent.

Research & Feasibility Studies

Develop a series of Cultural Hubs spread through Leitrim. These cultural hubs could include:

- Development of cultural spaces
- Niche specific events and festivals
- Linked and looped cultural events throughout Leitrim

With Leitrim County Council Arts Office develop a comprehensive 'mapping' of existing cultural spaces (representing all artforms) throughout the County. Also, identify those areas that may need capital development in order to provide spaces and opportunities for cultural events that attract visitors and support the principle of Integrity and Authenticity (people, places and stories). Link this to recommendation on Cultural Hubs.

Information & Communication packages

Review existing information and communication packages and develop under the new visual branding guidelines.

Tourism Product Packages

John Mc Gahern Summer School – In July of this year the first Summer School in memory of the famous writer John Mc Gahern will take place that will include various lectures and workshops on his work.

Writers Weekend – Last year a 3 day event was hosted for the Anthony Trollope Society of the USA and UK who were travelling through Ireland in the footsteps of their idol. Due to its success and the response from the participants it is planned to host another weekend this September which it is hope to develop into an annual event and expand to include other writers connected with Leitrim.

Taste of Leitrim - Endeavour to collate all the festivals together for the year and to put a structure on them leading to a non competing schedule of weekly events where possible and then to Market them collectively as a Taste of Leitrim.

Ploughing Champion's – this is not only a family festival but also an event which represents the heritage of our area. With various displays of farm machinery to farming methods used in the past it is certainly an event to be supported.

Support the expansion of current events which are of international and national recognition, such as the Joe Mooney Summer School, Drumshanbo and the Carrick on Shannon Water Music Festival. Also, to explore the further development of additional festivals to reach national importance.

With the expansion of the public art scheme in the county, seek to package a tourism product around this theme in the county.

Support the ongoing development of Leitrim based artists as a niche product and visitor market for the county in its own right through liasing with Leitrim Design House, Visual Leitrim and other art and craft initiatives.

Explore the support needed for Leitrim Design House plans for a sculpture/arts trail.

Training, Support & Development

Support the development of existing cultural centres of excellence such as the Dock in Carrick on Shannon, the Glens Centre in Manorhamilton, the Cornmill in Carrigallen, Shalynn Traditional Dance Centre in Ballinamore and the Sculpture Centre in Manorhamilton.

6.7 Self Improvement

Feeling curious ... interested ... want to feel mentally stimulated and knowledgeable ... relax into it

Many visitors take a break in order to learn and explore new things or to deepen their knowledge of an existing interest.

Rossinver Organic Centre, Sculpture Centre's course ... just a few examples of what's possible.

This is an underdeveloped market and one that could provide some interesting niche opportunities for small enterprises across all the themes in this report.

Development Recommendations

Develop **Learn About** packages – where visitors are invited to Leitrim to Learn About ... arts and crafts; sport; organics; fishing; history and culture.

Research and feasibility for a range of **learn about** packages that incorporate existing private and public product offerings and identify potential new development.

6.8 Heritage

'Shannon-Erne Waterway, Glencar Waterfall, Parke's Castle, Sheemore and Sheebeg, Sweathouses, Creevelea Ironworks, Black Pig's Dyke, Doon at Drumsna, Lough Rynn Estate, Sliabh an Iarainn, Glenade Lough, Kingfisher Trail, Pattern Days and Mummie Festivals. Landscapes, Architecture, Archaeology, Nature, Wildlife and Cultural festivals all combine to make up a unique sense of Leitrim.

This county has a rich and diverse Heritage and brings benefits to all that live in the county and those who visit. Along with forming our identity, heritage teaches us lessons from the past and also brings economic benefits to the county by providing scenic landscapes, vernacular architecture and historic monuments for the tourist. Retaining a wide diversity and quality of heritage resource may also be seen as a measure of success and competitiveness.

Caring for our heritage helps fulfil the need for sustainable development by maintaining the quality of our landscapes, historic and cultural resources and the heritage of the man-made environment. There are many people who are interested in and have responsibility for our heritage. (Leitrim Heritage Plan)

The Leitrim Heritage Plan contained 13 objectives and while all are in some way relevant to the development of sustainable and accessible tourism products – a number will have direct impact on the quality of the visitor experience:

1. To raise awareness of the importance of Leitrim's waterways, wetland habitats and species.
2. To promote sustainable planning for Leitrim's Waterways.
3. To maintain and create access to Leitrim's natural, built and cultural heritage.
4. To maintain and enhance the network of Leitrim's walkways.
5. To increase our knowledge of and promote the appropriate care and conservation of our historic sites and monuments.
6. To increase our knowledge of and promote the appropriate care and conservation of our architectural and industrial heritage.
7. To promote the use of the Irish language in Leitrim.
8. To raise awareness of Leitrim's cultural heritage.

Recommendations on these objectives have been made in previous sections and will also be detailed in this section

Natural Heritage

In a 2005 Failte Ireland survey 82% of visitors said they visited because of Ireland's scenery.

The stated Principles of Sustainability, a Quality Experience and High Standards clearly inform the development and protection of Leitrim's natural heritage.

Development Recommendations

Physical Infrastructure

That all key physical and access developments be guided by clear design and aesthetic criteria in order to enhance the visitors experience.

Identify key locations for the position of parking/lay-by/picnic areas to allow the tourist to be able to experience and enjoy this natural beauty.

The development of new and existing historical trails of the county both as car and walking tour visitor attractions. These trails to be used to provide guided routes to experience the vast heritage of the county and also trails associated with persons of historical and other importance to the county.

Support the continued development of the Green Box and Breifne Initiatives as niche tourism product developers relevant to the county and to the region.

Pursue the extension of the Geo Park to include Leitrim in conjunction with Fermanagh, Cavan and Sligo.

Research & Feasibility Studies

Research and audit Leitrim's protected scenic landscapes, monuments, wetlands, built heritage, historic and cultural sites, archaeology, geology and industrial heritage etc.

Taking into account the growth in motor touring, review and re-develop the scenic routes within the county as a tourist attraction. And let these developments be guided by Principles of Sustainable Tourism and Quality Experience (particularly the aesthetics of developing scenic routes.)

Information & Communication packages

Develop updated motor touring maps detailing the natural beauty and heritage of the county as identified through the above research to be seen and identify the locations for lay-bys and picnic areas and viewing points.

Cultural Heritage

Development Recommendations

Physical Infrastructure

Target access and signage for visitors to easily get the opportunity of seeing important places of Leitrim, such as the homesteads of Sean MacDiarmada and John McKenna.

Assess the feasibility of refurbishment work on the Drumshanbo Interpretative Centre.

Expand the potential of genealogy as a tourist product.

Assess the feasibility of the establishment of a Ballroom of Romance Visitors Centre

Research & Feasibility Studies

To evaluate the Roots festival and explore the feasibility of new ways of connecting and attracting visitors to it. This would also include exploring the feasibility of developing some form of information communication technology strategy to support and expand the potential visitor base.

Explore how the Genealogy Centre Ballinamore could be further developed as a visitor attraction.

Information & Communication packages

To generally assess the need for and nature of visitor information points throughout Leitrim.

Tourism Product Packages

Support the ongoing development of heritage tourism in Carrack on Shannon and the rest of Leitrim.

Leitrim Roots Festival - This festival has run successfully for 2 years, it attracts people from all over the world in search of their Leitrim Ancestry. Support the efforts at developing Leitrim Roots/Genealogy as a significant tourism niche of the county.

Support development of new and existing festivals/summer schools that will draw a critical mass of visitors e.g Writers Weekend, Ploughing Championships.

Develop linked packages to coincide with these major festivals that could encourage people to stay on or cross over to another theme

Training Support & Development

Develop an online Genealogy System to allow access of computerised records to researchers

Built Heritage

Development Recommendations

Physical Infrastructure

Maximise the potential from urban and village renewal and similar projects for the continued investment and enhancement in the appearances of the towns and villages of the county.

The provision of town parks and other passive recreational facilities, particularly in Carrick on Shannon, as a county town and as the town of significant marine activity and Manorhamilton with its important natural heritage.

Ensure the provision of adequate signposting to facilitate the car tourist, the walking tourist and the cycling tourist to make their way throughout their tour of the county and to be directed easily and conveniently to the important sites and attractions of the county.

Develop and support a policy of Irish and English signage (on shopfronts as well as roadsigns).

Research & Feasibility Studies

Explore the development of special signage that creates links and loops to themes – e.g O'Carolan & Trollope Trails.

Assess the access and interpretive development requirements of key historic monuments.

Information & Communication Packages

Develop a database of historic monuments in Leitrim.

Conserve, preserve and document Leitrim's traditional and contemporary architectural character.

6.9 Hidden Leitrim

History, architecture and beauty ... all in hidden Ireland.

There are a number of historic buildings that require further development if they are to be open to visitors.

Development Recommendations

Physical Infrastructure & Feasibility Research

Research the capital development needs of the following buildings and decide the feasibility of developing each one over a 6 year period:

- Ballroom of Romance
- Killegar Estate
- Manorhamilton Castle
- Star Fort Manorhamilton
- Green's Mill
- Jamestown Arch
- Costello Chapel

Tourism Product Packages

Development of themed packages to suit a particular project i.e. Ballroom of Romance Come Dancing weekends

Training, Support & Development

To provide a mentoring service to each of the projects to assist with the marketing and development of packages for the promotion of their products.

6.9 Transport Linkages to get to Leitrim and travel around it

A strong element of a visitors decision to visit is how accessible it is to travel to and around. If visitors find it difficult to get to Leitrim and then to travel around it they will go somewhere else.

It is therefore of critical importance that we pursue the enhancement of access to and within the county to tourism products.

Development Recommendations

Establish the best possible transfer of service between airports and the county and also from the main train and bus terminals within the county.

Encourage and insist on the provision of an improved road network that allows for easy coach access to the major attractions and sites of natural beauty within the county.

Continue to work for the enhancement of road networks which have an important part to play in access to the county and within the county, in particular continue upgrading of the N4, N16, R280, R201 and R202.

Enhance the linkages with Knock Airport and Sligo Airport as airports of regional importance to tourism product in Leitrim.

Continue with the efforts to enhance the rail service to Dromod and Carrick on Shannon- on-Shannon as an important feeder of tourists into the South Leitrim area.

Continue to seek for improvements to the bus network which is an important piece of transport infrastructure, particularly to the north of the county.

Continuing to develop road infrastructure and linkage points from Sligo, Knock, Donegal, Belfast, Derry and Dublin airports.

6.10 Provision of a range of Accommodation Options

Development Recommendations

With the growth in the hotel sector continue to work with the provision of adequate hotel services throughout the county, particularly north and east Leitrim.

Encourage the networking of the hoteliers in the county, to facilitate tourist visitors to the county throughout the year, including peak season.

Continue to encourage the provision of other tourist accommodation such as hostels, bed and breakfasts and other facilities developed through initiatives such as the Green Box etc.

Further develop existing caravan and camping facilities at Lough Rynn and pursue the potential development of additional facilities for the caravan and camping tourism market.

7. Partnership & Collaboration

Without resourcing partnerships (time, money, people, ideas etc.) none of these actions can be realised.

This is a discussions document and is full of actions that will be the lead responsibility of agencies other than Leitrim County Council.

Development Recommendations

That Leitrim County Council host a gathering of key development and tourism organisations (statutory and others) in late Autumn 2007 to provide an opportunity for feedback and discussion of this document. It is clear that this is a discussion document and is therefore not set in concrete.

Through this forum the action plan (9.2) can be assessed and completed in relation to the actions agreed, potential partners, resources and timescales.

8. Communication & Engagement

This is a discussion document and as such will be of interest to a range of organisations and individuals.

Engaging and communicating with our citizens

It is vital that our citizens have the opportunity to explore the ideas detailed in this report.

Development Recommendations

That a strategy be developed that communicates this report and allows people to provide feedback and input their ideas. A number of suggestions include:

- Posting the draft report on the Local Authority website (and other relevant partner websites) and enable people to email or write their ideas back to the Authority.
- That a poster (folded) is designed that encapsulates the principles, themes and ideas developed in this report. They can then be distributed easily to a range of outlets in all areas of Leitrim. A contact email and address can be added so people can communicate their additional ideas.

Engaging and communicating with Tourism enterprises.

It won't happen without the initiative of private enterprises (small and large) working in partnership with public agencies.

A number of recommendations for initial round table discussions under themed tourism product sections were detailed in the body of this report.

Development Recommendation

Leitrim County Council host a series of round table discussions of relevant development, tourism and sectoral organisations and individuals to explore the tourism development opportunities and challenges specifically in the Wellness and Gastronomy themed areas in later 2007 and into 2008.

9. Appendices

9.1 Bibliography of reports

Submissions received from:

- ❑ **Leitrim Design House**
- ❑ **Killegar Estate**
- ❑ **Senator Paschal Mooney** (Re: Drumshambo Interpretative centre)
- ❑ **Martin Dolan**
- ❑ **Glenfarne Community Development Trust Ltd.**
- ❑ **Rossinver Community Centre**
- ❑ **Anthony Daly** (Development of Manorhamilton Castle)

A range of statistical reports on Failte Ireland website.

County Leitrim Heritage Plan. 2003-2008.

Destination Fermanagh. The Vision for Tourism 2006 – 2016

Environmental Protection Authority. State of the Environment Report. 2006

Failte Ireland. Tourism Product Development Strategy. 2007 – 2013

Failte Ireland North West. Tourism Product Development Strategy. 2007 – 2013

Leitrim County Development Board. Social Economic and Cultural Profile of County Leitrim.

Local Governments Engagement in Tourism. South Australia. 2006.

9.2 Table of all initiatives – developing an action plan

Strategic Area	Action	Partnership	Timeframe		
			Short 07/08	Med 09/10	Long 11/12
The 8 Principles					
Principle 1 – Sustainable Tourism – environment, community, economy	Develop a policy statement regarding sustainable tourism for Leitrim CoCo				
Principle 2 - A Quality Experience - for visitors and communities	Develop a policy statement regarding elements of a quality experience that can guide good practice				
Principle 3 - Integrity and Authenticity - of the people, places, & stories of Leitrim	Develop a policy statement that provides examples of Leitrim's authenticity				
Principle 4 - Partnership & Collaboration - between key tourism and development agencies	Continue partnership and collaboration.				
Principle 5 - Communication & Engagement - with partners, tourism enterprises and community	Develop strategies for multi level ways of communicating and engaging with partners, tourism enterprises & community				
Principle 6 – Tourism and Local Economic Development - developing ways to link tourism product developments with local business development	Explore and research tourism initiatives that support local enterprises as well as large scale developments				

<p>Principle 7 - High standards – in development and delivery of tourism products</p>	<p>Develop written and agreed standards of practice (linked to these 8 principles) against which organisations can access, fund and even award tourism initiatives.</p> <p>Identify and resource key countywide support and development opportunities for the tourism workforce and enterprises</p>				
<p>Principle 8 – Results - Monitor, reflect and evaluate progress</p>	<p>Develop an Evaluation framework to assess impact and results from these planned actions</p>				
<p>Themed Areas</p>					
<p>Rural Culture</p>	<p>Pursue the further development of existing attractions within the county that have the potential to contribute to the goal of larger visitors numbers, including Glencar Waterfall, Parkes Castle.</p>				
<p>Physical Infrastructure</p>	<p>Establish the potential for value added to the establishment of a cluster of significant attractions coming from those detailed above in Leitrim and including neighbouring attractions, such as developments at Lough Key, Forest Park, Arigna Mining experience and Marble Arch Caves, Fermanagh.</p>				
<p>Research & Feasibility Studies</p>	<p>Determine a priority list for the flagship product area concentrating on initiatives in the incubation phase, such as Mohill/Dromod railway line, Ballroom of Romance, Glenfarne.</p>				
<p>Information & Communication packages</p>	<p>Develop relevant information and communication packages (with multi faceted distribution channels) as new initiatives come to fruition. All packages will be designed using the new visual branding design criteria.</p>				

	Develop written policy on new package design criteria.				
Tourism Product Packages	Develop Linked & Looped packages that connect cluster attractions.				
Training, Support & Development	Develop a training and product development package for taxi and minibus owners that enables them to provide a range of different rural culture experiences in their locales. These people often have a wealth of local knowledge and tell great stories - they know their area back to front) e.g. music wandering; a tour of history with a stop for coffee; a mystery wander; stories and people of the area etc. People coming off the boats may not have access to a car and would enjoy a 2 to 4 hour Wander Around Tour . Interested businesses would take part in a training/development process that would enable them to collectively develop (under the Leitrim brand) a series of packages with promotion and pricing bundles. They would be provided with information packages and as an assessment they would take a number of people on a local tour. Successful 'recruits' would receive a Wander Around Tour Operator sticker as accreditation. This could also be developed for walking and cycling.				
	Develop a network of attractions and provide training and supports to develop awareness and knowledge of other similar themed products in the county which will contribute to an enhanced customer service and referral service between attractions which will both grow business and improve the visitor experience.				
Gastronomy Physical Infrastructure	Physical and capital works plans will be developed as a result of the 07/08 round table discussions with the sector and development partners.				
Research & Feasibility Studies	Leitrim County Council with Leitrim Tourism & Leitrim County Enterprise Board (and other relevant bodies) will work with the Food Hub, Western Organic Network, Rossinver Organic Centre, Green Box (and any other relevant groups) to explore development ideas regarding niche				

	food tourism. As a first step we will convene a 3 hour round table discussion in 2007/08.				
Information & Communication packages	Develop a Food Circle Guide that includes gourmet and organic outlets, farmers markets, information				
	Develop relevant information and communication packages (with multi faceted distribution channels) as new initiatives come to fruition. All packages will be designed using the new visual branding design criteria.				
Tourism Product Packages	Packages will be developed after initial round table discussions between relevant partners in the sector.				
Training, Support & Development	Training, support and development needs and services will be developed as a result of the 07/08 round table discussions and resulting product development packages.				
Wellness Physical Infrastructure	Physical and capital works plans will be developed as a result of the 07/08 round table discussions with the sector and development partners				
Research & Feasibility Studies	Leitrim County Council, Leitrim Tourism and Leitrim County Enterprise Board (and other relevant partners) host a 2 to 3 hour initial round table discussion in 2007/08 with ArdNahoo, any hotel spas, and other wellness enterprises to explore development ideas regarding niche wellness tourism.				
Information & Communication packages	Develop relevant information and communication packages (with multi faceted distribution channels) as new initiatives come to fruition. All packages will be designed using the new visual branding design criteria.				
	Explore potential to develop a Wellness Guide to Leitrim that details the available wellness/health centres/ health food shops/ body and beauty treatment businesses & alternative health options as well as doctors, dentists, physiotherapists etc				
Tourism Product Packages	Packages will be developed after initial round table discussions between relevant partners in the sector.				

Training, Support & Development	Training, support and development needs and services will be developed as a result of the 07/08 round table discussions and resulting product development packages.				
Soft Adventure Angling Physical Infrastructure	Identify a priority list of angling areas for new infrastructure developments including parking facilities, access and fishing stands, disability friendly as standard.				
	Through consultation with regional tourism and fisheries bodies, put in place a programme to secure the improvements to a minimum of three locations on an annual basis.				
Research & Feasibility Studies	Using information from fish stock assessments on the Shannon and knowledge of local fishing groups establish the locations of the greatest need for investment in order to provide an enhanced product in the areas of demand.				
	Continue to assess levels of eutrophication in order to protect fish stocks in line with the EU Water Framework Directive.				
	Establish the availability and need for the required facilities for anglers e.g. storage, drying facilities etc. Establish the feasibility of the increase of these facilities at the targeted angling locations in the county. Establish the other needs and alternative visitor requirements of the visiting angler in today's market and seek to address these issues with a view to the provision of an all encompassing angling visitor experience for the county.				
Information & Communication packages	Review existing information and communication packages and develop under the new visual branding guidelines.				
Tourism Product Packages	Support the development of Cross Border Events i.e. Pike angling Border challenge which is due to take place in Feb 08 this event has resulted from a cross border project between counties Fermanagh and Leitrim. The event will be targeted at the overseas angler.				

	Encourage the development of Children's Angling Summer Camps, Angling Team Building packages.				
Training, Support & Development	Development of an Angling Training Centre for children and adults in an existing accommodation site.				
Walking & Cycling Physical Infrastructure	Kingfisher Trail – finish developing the loop				
	Review maintenance and upgrading of the Way Marked Ways within the county and the updating of guided routes of these trails.				
	Work with key partners to assess and resolve issues of public access to potential walk and cycle ways.				
	Do an access audit and plan for walkways and cycling with the relevant partners.				
Research & Feasibility Studies	Explore potential for developing a group insurance scheme for businesses that hire bikes in order to expand the numbers of areas that provide this service.				
Information & Communication packages	Review existing information and communication packages and develop under the new visual branding guidelines.				
	Explore the potential to develop information packages that linked walking/cycling with other themes such as Heritage.				
Tourism Product Packages	Support and encourage the development of ancillary services to cater for the requirements of the walking and cycling tourist – from novice to expert.				
Golfing	Support and encourage the development of a comprehensive golfing product in Leitrim to coincide with the establishment of the new golfing courses at Lough Rynn, Dromod etc.				

Equestrian	Research the potential opportunities and challenges to developing this product.				
Waterways, Lake, Rivers & Forests Development Physical Infrastructure	Support and actively pursue the extension of navigation further in the county including Lough Rynn, Drumsna and Lough Allen.				
	Further develop facilities for inland cruising visitors (e.g. mooring, sheltered BBQ's)				
	Support the Carrick on Shannon Rowing Club, Ireland's oldest rowing club dating back to 1827.				
Research & Feasibility Studies	In order to maximise the potential of scenic resources, such as Lough Allen and Lough Melvin, support the preparation of feasibility study/catchment plan for these areas, which will assist in identifying the potential that these important natural resources can bring to the tourism market of the county.				
	Research areas on lakes and in forests that need to be zoned as either soft activity (walking, swimming, kayaking) or hard activity (quad bikes, motorboats, jet skis) for both safety, recreational and environmental purposes.				
	Identify all areas in Leitrim that are or could be designated as - special conservation for habitats and species; special protection areas for birds; natural heritage areas; and any scenic landscapes that need special protection.				
	Research the feasibility of developing a range of waterways events and competitions				
Information & Communication packages	Review existing information and communication packages and develop under the new visual branding guidelines.				
Tourism Product Packages	Explore expansion of water sports as a tourism attraction. Need to define what we mean by water sports and ensure that they are linked with the core principles of sustainability and authenticity.				

	Develop the existing Carrick on Shannon Regatta one of the longest running regattas in Ireland.				
	Explore potential for development of wildlife, flora and fauna packages.				
Training, Support & Development	Develop any relevant programmes as a result of new initiatives.				
Culture & Celebration Physical Infrastructure	Events space - It is proposed to develop the quay area around the Barrel store and Area Engineers office in Carrick on Shannon, which is presently a car park, to an events space which will include a paved area, landscaping, provision for audio equipment, and a band stand area. This area will attract specific arts and water sports activities, which will link both the Leitrim and Fermanagh Arts Centre's and also the Shannon Erne system.				
	Pursue concepts of the development of open-air event squares in Carrick on Shannon (at the Dock) and Manorhamilton as a new method of providing family events and showcasing local and invited talent.				
Research & Feasibility Studies	Develop a series of Cultural Hubs spread through Leitrim. These cultural hubs could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Development of cultural spaces <input type="checkbox"/> Niche specific events and festivals <input type="checkbox"/> Linked and looped cultural events throughout Leitrim 				

	With Leitrim County Council Arts Office develop a comprehensive 'mapping' of existing cultural spaces (representing all artforms) throughout the County. Also, identify those areas that may need capital development in order to provide spaces and opportunities for cultural events that attract visitors and support the principle of Integrity and Authenticity (people, places and stories). Link this to recommendation on Cultural Hubs.				
Information & Communication packages	Review existing information and communication packages and develop under the new visual branding guidelines.				
Tourism Product Packages	John Mc Gahern Summer School – In July of this year the first Summer School in memory of the famous writer John Mc Gahern will take place, which will include various lectures and workshops on his work.				
	Writers Weekend – Last year a 3 day event was hosted for the Anthony Trollope Society of the USA and UK who were travelling through Ireland in the footsteps of their idol. Due to its success and the response from the participants it is planned to host another weekend this September which it is hope to develop into an annual event and expand to include other writers connected with Leitrim.				
	Taste of Leitrim - This is only at the idea stage at present, it is proposed to collate all the festivals together for the year and hopefully to put a structure on them having an event each week or month where possible then to Market them collectively as a Taste of Leitrim.				

	Support the expansion of current events that are of international and national recognition, such as the Joe Mooney Summer School, Drumshanbo and the Carrick on Shannon Water Music Festival. Also, to explore the further development of additional festivals to reach national importance.				
	Ploughing Champion's – this is not only a family festival but also an event which represents the heritage of our area. With various displays of farm machinery to farming methods used in the past it is certainly an event to be supported.				
	With the expansion of the public art scheme in the county, seek to package a tourism product around this theme in the county.				
	Support the ongoing development of Leitrim based artists as a niche product and visitor market for the county in its own right through liaising with Leitrim Design House, Visual Leitrim and other art and craft initiatives.				
	Explore the support needed for Leitrim Design House plans for a sculpture/arts trail.				
Training, Support & Development	Support the development of existing cultural centres of excellence such as the Dock in Carrick on Shannon, the Glens Centre in Manorhamilton, Shalynn Traditional Dance Centre in Ballinamore and the Sculpture Centre in Manorhamilton.				
Self Improvement	Develop Learn About packages – where visitors are invited to Leitrim to Learn About ... arts and crafts; sport; organics; fishing; history and culture. Research and feasibility for a range of learn about packages that incorporate existing private and public product offerings and identify potential new development.				

Heritage Natural Heritage Physical Infrastructure	That all key physical and access developments be guided by clear design and aesthetic criteria in order to enhance the visitors experience.				
	Identify key locations for the position of parking/lay-by/picnic areas to allow the tourist to be able to experience and enjoy this natural beauty.				
	The development of new and existing historical trails of the county both as car and walking tour visitor attractions. These trails to be used to provide guided routes to experience the vast heritage of the county and also trails associated with persons of historical and other importance to the county.				
Research & Feasibility Studies	Research and audit Leitrim's protected scenic landscapes.				
	Taking into account the growth in car touring, review and re-develop the scenic routes within the county as a tourist attraction. And let these developments be guided by Principles of Sustainable Tourism and Quality Experience (particularly the aesthetics of developing scenic routes.)				
Information & Communication packages	Develop updated car touring maps detailing the natural beauty and heritage of the county to be seen and identify the locations for lay-bys and picnics				
Tourism Product Packages					
Training, Support & Development					

<p>Cultural Heritage</p> <p>Physical Infrastructure</p>	<p>Target access and signage for visitors to easily get the opportunity of seeing important places of Leitrim, such as the homesteads of Sean MacDiarmada and John McKenna.</p> <p>Assess the feasibility of refurbishment work on the Drumshanbo Interpretative Centre</p>				
<p>Research & Feasibility Studies</p>	<p>To evaluate the Roots festival and explore the feasibility of new ways of connecting and attracting visitors to it. This would also include exploring the feasibility of developing some form of information communication technology strategy to support and expand the potential visitor base.</p> <p>Explore how the Genealogy Centre Ballinamore could be further developed as a visitor attraction.</p>				
<p>Information & Communication packages</p>	<p>To generally assess the need for and nature of visitor information points throughout Leitrim.</p>				
<p>Tourism Product Packages</p>	<p>Support the ongoing development of heritage tourism in Carrack on Shannon and other parts of Leitrim.</p> <p>Leitrim Roots Festival - This festival has run successfully for 2 years, it attracts people from all over the world in search of their Leitrim Ancestry. Support the efforts at developing Leitrim Roots/Genealogy as a significant tourism niche of the county.</p> <p>Support development of new festivals that will draw a critical mass of visitors e.g. John McGahern Summer School; Writers Weekend.</p> <p>Develop linked packages to coincide with these major festivals that could encourage people to stay on or cross over to another theme</p>				

Training, Support & Development	Develop an online Genealogy System to allow access of computerised records to researchers				
Built Heritage Physical Infrastructure	Maximise the potential from urban and village renewal and similar projects for the continued investment and enhancement in the appearances of the towns and villages of the county.				
	The provision of town parks and other passive recreational facilities, particularly in Carrick on Shannon, as a county town and as the town of significant marine activity and Manorhamilton with its important natural heritage.				
	Ensure the provision of adequate signposting to facilitate the car tourist, the walking tourist and the cycling tourist to make their way throughout their tour of the county and to be directed easily and conveniently to the important sites and attractions of the county.				
	Develop and support a policy of Irish and English signage (on shop fronts as well as road signs).				
Research & Feasibility Studies	Explore the development of special signage that creates links and loops to themes – e.g. the kingfisher way (signage in place); O'Carolan & Trollope				
	Assess the access and interpretive development requirements of key historic monuments.				
Information & Communication packages	Develop a database of historic monuments in Leitrim				
	Conserve, preserve and document Leitrim's traditional and contemporary architectural character.				
Tourism Product Packages					
Training, Support & Development					

<p>Hidden Ireland</p> <p>Physical Infrastructure</p>	<p>Research the capital development needs of the following buildings and decide the feasibility of developing each one over a 6 year period:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Ballroom of Romance <input type="checkbox"/> Killegar Estate <input type="checkbox"/> Manorhamilton Castle <input type="checkbox"/> Star Fort Manorhamilton <input type="checkbox"/> Green's Mill <input type="checkbox"/> Jamestown Arch <input type="checkbox"/> Costello Chapel 				
<p>Research & Feasibility Studies</p>					
<p>Information & Communication packages</p>					
<p>Tourism Product Packages</p>	<p>Development of themed packages to suit a particular project i.e. Ballroom of Romance Come Dancing weekends</p>				
<p>Training, Support & Development</p>	<p>To provide a mentoring service to each of the projects to assist with the marketing and development of packages for the promotion of their products.</p>				
<p>Transport Linkages</p>	<p>Establish the best possible transfer of service between airports and the county and also from the main train and bus terminals within the county.</p>				
	<p>Encourage and insist on the provision of an improved road network that allows for easy coach access to the major attractions and sites of natural beauty within the county.</p>				

	Continue to work for the enhancement of road networks that have an important part to play in access to the county and within the county, in particular continue upgrading of the N4, N16, R280 and R202.				
	Enhance the linkages with Knock Airport and Sligo Airport as airports of regional importance to tourism product in Leitrim.				
	Continue with the efforts to enhance the rail service to Dromod and Carrick on Shannon- on-Shannon as an important feeder of tourists into the South Leitrim area.				
	Continue to seek for improvements to the bus network that is an important piece of transport infrastructure, particularly to the north of the county.				
	Continuing to develop road infrastructure and linkage points from Sligo, Knock, Donegal, Belfast, Derry and Dublin airports				
Accommodation	With the growth in the hotel sector continue to work with the provision of adequate hotel services throughout the county, particularly north and east Leitrim.				
	Encourage the networking of the hoteliers in the county, to facilitate tourist visitors to the county throughout the year, including peak season.				

	Continue to encourage the provision of other tourist accommodation such as hostels, bed and breakfasts and other facilities developed through initiatives such as the Green Box etc.				
	Further develop existing caravan and camping facilities at Lough Rynn and pursue the potential development of additional facilities for the caravan and camping tourism market.				
Partnership & Collaboration	That Leitrim County Council host a gathering of key development and tourism organisations (statutory and others) in late Autumn to provide an opportunity for feedback and discussion of this document. It is clear that this is a discussion document and is therefore not set in concrete.				
	Support the ongoing Green Box and Breifne initiatives as niche tourism product developers relevant to the county and to the region.				

<p>Communication & Engagement</p>	<p>That a strategy be developed that communicates this report and allows people to provide feedback and input their ideas. A number of suggestions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Posting the draft report on the Local Authority website (and other relevant partner websites) and enable people to email or write their ideas back to the Authority. ❑ That a poster (folded) is designed that encapsulates the principles, themes and ideas developed in this report. They can then be distributed easily to a range of outlets in all areas of Leitrim. A contact email and address can be added so people can communicate their additional ideas. 				
	<p>Leitrim County Council host a series of round table discussions of relevant development, tourism and sectoral organisations and individuals to explore the tourism development opportunities and challenges specifically in the Wellness and Gastronomy themed areas in later 2007 and into 2008.</p>				

9.3 Existing Tourism Products under Failte Ireland Product Development Themes

Hidden Leitrim

To Visit:

Sean Mac Diarmada's Homestead
Parkes Castle

To Stay: - Heritage Accommodation

Lough Rynn Castle	Mohill
The Old Rectory	Fenagh
Caldra House	Carrick on Shannon
Glebe House	Mohill
Hollywell	Carrick on Shannon

Gastronomy

Food Hub Drumshanbo
Harvest Festival 8th & 9th September Drumshanbo
Origin Farmers Markets
Organic Centre Rossinver
Interesting gourmet and health food shops through Leitrim

Interesting Restaurants

Lebanese Jamestown
French - Dromahair
Western Salon Bar Drumcoura

Pubs – Award wining

Oarsman – Carrick on Shannon
Brandywell - Dromod
The Court - Kinlough

Heritage

Historical Interpretive Centre

Parkes Castle
Carrick on Shannon Heritage (coming soon)
Fenagh Heritage Centre

Historical Attractions

Jamestown Village
Glencar Waterfall
Parkes Castle
Costello Memorial Chapel
Fenagh Abbey
Creevelea Abbey
Famine graveyards
Manorhamilton Castle
Star Fort
Sean Mac Diarmada Homestead
Historic sites including sweat houses, monuments, and holywells
Historical Trail Drumsna (been developed)

Wellness

Spa's – Ramada Hotel – (coming soon Lough Rynn)
Health Farms – Ard na Hoo
Wellness – Fraoch Ban – B&B with therapy rooms

Culture and Celebration

Venues – The Dock, The Glens Centre and Corn Mill Theatre & Rainbow Ballroom

Galleries

The Dock and new one in Ballinamore

Museums

Glenview folk Museum, Cavan Leitrim Railway, Teach Duchas Drumeela, Darty Centre Kinlough and Heritage Centre – Drumkeerin Sliabh an Iarainn Visitors centre

Gardens

Organic Centre and Lough Rynn Gardens

Craft Outlets

Leitrim Design Carrick on Shannon and Sculpture Centre Manorhamilton

Festivals

Carrick on Shannon Water Music	Ballinamore Family Festival
An Tostal	Carrigallen Summer Festival
Joe Mooney Summer School	John Mc Kenna Trad weekend
Food Fest	Michael Shanley weekend
Leitrim Roots	Walking Festivals – Sliabh an Iarainn and North Leitrim Glens

Vintage Day – Drumsna

Drama Festival

Genealogy

Genealogy Centre – Ballinamore

Leitrim Roots Festival

Rural Cultural

Working Farms

Organic Centre & Swan Island Animal Farm

Nature Trails – Mc Nean Sculpture Trail

Tidy Towns

Dromod

Touring Routes

Shannon Drive

Wild Rose Drive

Glencar Drive

Lough Allen Drive

Tourist Information

County Tourist Office - Carrick on Shannon

Tourist point – Smyth's Ballinamore

Touch Screens – Drumkerrin, Glenfarne, Drumsna and Carrick on Shannon (being developed)

Library Service Information, Mohill, Drumshanbo and Manorhamilton (being developed)

Soft Adventure

Adventure Centres – Lough Allen Adventure Centre

Must See Attractions – Glencar Waterfall, Parkes Castle

Family – Swan Island, Cavan Leitrim Railway, Glenview Museum, Monks Den (Children's soft play area)

Angling Waters – Coarse including Pike and Game (first salmon of the year)

Equestrian

Drumshanbo – Moorlands

Dromod – Hayden's

Ballinamore – Drumcoura Western Riding & Swan Island

Golf

9 Hole – Ballinamore

18 Hole – Carrick on Shannon (coming soon Lough Rynn and Dromod)

Walking

Way Marked Routes – Sliabh an Iarainn, Leitrim Way and Miners Way

Also North Leitrim Glens

Inland Cruising – Shannon Erne Waterways and River Shannon

Private Cruise Hire

- Emerald Star
- Carrick on Shannon Craft
- Shannon Private Cruisers
- Tara Cruisers
- Loca boat
- Riverdale Barges

Pleasure Cruises – Wild Rose Waterbus and Moon River

Cycling Routes

Kingfisher and Tour de Humbert

Heritage

Historic Building Sites

Costello Memorial Chapel

Jamestown Village

Doon of Drumsna

Sean Mc Diarmada Homestead