

# COUNTY CARLOW

## Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2020-2025

Prepared by:

 **Future Analytics**  
Planning | Research | Economics

Prepared for:

 carlow  
tourism

Supported by:

 **CARLOW**  
COUNTY COUNCIL



# County Carlow

*Fuair an tionscnamh seo fóir-dheontas ó Coiste um Fhorbairt Pobail Aituil Cheatharlach, Clár Forbartha Tuaithe atá maoinithe ag Rialtas na hÉireann faoi Chlár Forbartha Tuaithe Éireann 2014-2020 agus ag Ciste Talamhaíochta na hEorpa d'Fhorbairt Tuaithe: infheistiú na hEorpa i Limistéir Tuaithe.*

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**The County Carlow Tourism Strategy 2020-2025, commissioned by Carlow Tourism and Carlow County Council, has been carried out by Future Analytics Consulting and was guided by a sub-group of the Board of Carlow Tourism comprising Kathleen Holohan, CE Carlow County Council, Fr. Conn Ó Maoldhomhnaigh, President Carlow College, St. Patrick's and Michael Walsh, General Manager, Seven Oaks Hotel in conjunction with the CEO of Carlow Tourism, Eileen O'Rourke. This strategic roadmap has been prepared in the context of Ireland's Ancient East and is informed by the Sustainable Development Goals. The purpose of this strategy is to:**

- **improve the profile of Carlow as a holiday destination;**
- **maximise economic outputs for tourism in the county;**
- **grow tourism related employment in the county; and**
- **improve the product offering and visitor experience.**

The objective is to build on good work done and develop an achievable road map for the future. Crucially, the strategy must ensure **development is balanced with protection for the heritage foundations upon which tourism is based.**

**The strategy must also consider the context within which it is being prepared.** Until recently the government remained positive with growth envisaged until 2025. In this context the Government revised upwards its projections for 2025, with headline targets for revenue from overseas tourists to increase by 25%; employment in the tourism sector to increase by 19%, and visitor numbers to Ireland to increase by 22%. However, in the context of **Covid-19 and Brexit**, it can be expected that there will be a significant decline in international visitors during 2020 and 2021, with a slow increase thereafter, which will impact upon revenue and employment targets.

**County Carlow is a gem with considerable untapped tourism potential.** Overlooked by many domestic and overseas visitors, the county has beautiful mountains and rivers, tranquil countryside, world-class gardens and houses, and a wide array of outdoor activities less than an hour from Dublin. However, the county lacks a flagship attraction and many existing attractions are not visitor ready. Carlow Tourism is well-respected with strong marketing material, but the current brand lacks market resonance and the county is not viewed by tour operators as a desirable destination.

This strategy recommends a **marketing proposition** for County Carlow as:

*'A home of Irish heritage and culture - where visitors can discover the stories of Carlow people in spectacular houses and gardens, set amidst scenic mountains and picturesque rivers which provide the backdrop for a diverse range of outdoor activities and other historic and nature-based offerings. Experience Ireland's Ancient East on Dublin's Doorstep.'*

Underpinning the objectives and actions for the county a **vision for County Carlow as a visitor destination** is proposed:

*'Through implementation of this strategy County Carlow will be a welcoming and high-quality destination offering visitors a diverse range of experiences based on the county's heritage – an opportunity for visitors to discover historic big houses, spectacular gardens and unique ecclesiastical and historic/cultural attractions, and to easily engage in outdoor recreation, set amidst the county's unspoilt environment, with choices to stay overnight in vibrant towns and villages.'*

This will be achieved by raising visitor awareness of Carlow, through development of a flagship attraction and enhancing other key attractions, aligned with Ireland's Ancient East, and effective partnerships between public, private and community sectors, and with a focus on low-impact responsible tourism.

The vision for County Carlow is to achieve a **step change in the awareness of the county amongst domestic and overseas visitors** and to ensure opportunities identified to enhance the offer are taken through **effective public-private-community partnerships**, while **harnessing opportunities presented by the Ireland's Ancient East brand**. This vision underpins the objectives and actions for the county and is pragmatic, the goal is to **increase visitor revenue and enhance job creation** in County Carlow, supporting a sustainable tourism economy based on built and cultural heritage and the natural environment, while **ensuring the resources upon which tourism is based are protected.**

To achieve this vision, **five pillars and associated goals** are defined in Chapter Four, supported by a range of recommendations and actions.

These are illustrated in Figure 1.



# Vision

# Pillars

# Goals

# Actions

‘Through implementation of this strategy County Carlow will be a welcoming and high-quality destination offering visitors a diverse range of experiences based on the county’s heritage – an opportunity for visitors to discover historic big houses, spectacular gardens and unique ecclesiastical attractions, and to easily engage in outdoor recreation, set amidst the county’s unspoilt environment, with choices to stay overnight in vibrant towns and villages.’

This will be achieved by raising visitor awareness of Carlow, through development of a flagship attraction aligned with Ireland’s Ancient East, and effective partnerships between public, private and community sectors, with a focus on low-impact responsible tourism.

**Pillar 1:**  
Destination Management

**Pillar 2:**  
Visitor experience and product development including festivals and events

**Pillar 3:**  
Capacity Development

**Pillar 4:**  
Partnership Development

**Pillar 5:**  
Brand and Marketing Communications

**Goal 1:** To reinforce destination management structures to ensure a coordinated approach to tourism development, that supports the growth of the County Carlow tourism economy.

**Goal 2:** To identify opportunities for product enhancement and visitor experience development that align with the vision and themes of the Ireland’s Ancient East brand and with visitor target market segments.

**Goal 3:** To strengthen the capacity of industry to create and promote experiences that will attract priority segments from key markets.

**Goal 4:** To identify internal and external collaborative opportunities between public, private and community sectors that maximise return on investment and that facilitate the development of enterprises and experiences around a shared vision and ambition.

**Goal 5:** To raise the profile of County Carlow as a high-quality visitor destination that leverages the Ireland’s Ancient East brand and attracts more visitors matched to County Carlow’s tourism offer.

- Blackstairs Task Group
- Signage Audit and wayfinding
- Public transport network (Ring-a-Link)
- Access for all

- New science/industrial heritage museum
- Visitor Experience Plan for VISUAL
- Enhanced attractions, hubs, routes, trails
- A Journey Through Time
- Big Houses and Beautiful Gardens
- Valleys Views and Vales
- Inspired by Carlow

- Capacity building
- Market ready saleable experiences
- Bundled day and overnight itineraries
- Training supports
- Reduce tourism carbon footprint
- Local sourcing

- Intercounty initiatives and itineraries
- Tourism Ambassadors
- Strategic discussions

- Community surveys
- County Carlow Food and Drink Trail
- Relaunch County Carlow brand
- Budget Planning and Activity Plans
- International and domestic promotion
- Capitalising on Ireland’s Ancient East
- Collaborative marketing
- Digital marketing

Figure 1:  
Strategy Overview

This strategy is informed by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development landscape. Carlow County Council was chosen as one of twelve leaders in the state to drive forward **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**; responsible for raising awareness and overseeing the national implementation of the 2030 agenda by highlighting practical ways in which communities and organisations can contribute. The overall vision, recommendations and actions outlined hereafter have therefore been developed with their potential to contribute to the SDGs in mind. By extension, the aim is that this approach will benefit the economy, community and environment of County Carlow.

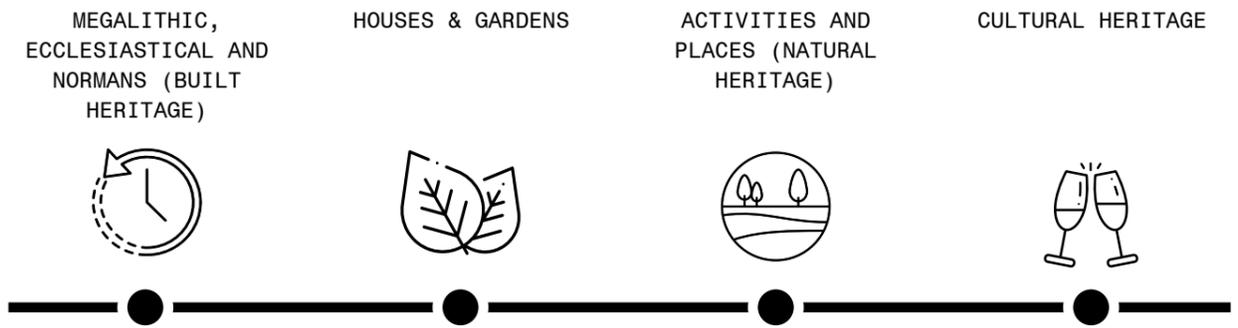
The priority of the recommendations is to ensure effective **destination management (Pillar 1)** and recommendations and actions focus on:

- measures to increase the revenue base for Carlow Tourism;
- a new Carlow Rural Recreation Officer role;
- a new Blackstairs Mountains Task Group;
- a signage strategy;
- increasing community involvement in tourism decision making;
- exploration of a bus service to link attractions and accommodation hubs;
- encouraging and facilitating more accessible tourism; and
- overview and monitoring.

**Visitor experience and product development (Pillar 2)** is considered fundamentally important to expand the tourism offer of the county. This element of the strategy is informed by consultation undertaken as part of the strategy development; by consideration of Ireland’s Ancient East themes; and matching visitor experience investment to visitor target market needs.

The most significant proposal under this objective is for a feasibility study in Carlow Town **which links the industrial and scientific historic sites, ancestors, characters and experiences throughout County Carlow.** This flagship attraction could function as a visitor hub and attractor for the county, driving growth in overseas and domestic tourism and raising awareness of the wider County Carlow offer. While other attractions offer significant potential, such as Duckett’s Grove, Altamont Gardens and St. Mullins, the proposed flagship concept offers the greatest potential over the lifetime of this strategy to grow year-round visitor numbers and raise the profile of the county.

Informed by extensive community and trade engagement and detailed destination analysis, **four themes are identified for visitor experience, product development and marketing purposes** that play to the county’s strengths and offer the best opportunity to raise awareness of the county’s tourism offer, enhance visitor experience and benefit those living and working in the county. These themes, ‘A Journey Through Time’, ‘Big Houses and Beautiful Gardens’, ‘Valleys Views and Vales’ and ‘Inspired by Carlow’, provide a framework for development, as shown in figure 2. Importantly they target visitors most likely to be interested in an extended visit to the Ireland’s Ancient East destination, the ‘Culturally Curious’ and ‘Great Escapers’; as well as experiences identified as of interest to the domestic market e.g. big houses, gardens and walking.



### A Journey Through Time

**Early Settlers:** Brownshill Dolmen, Rathgall Hillfort, Ballon Hill, Carlow County Museum

**Ecclesiastical Era:** St. Mullins, Columban Way, Clonmore Castle and Monastic Site (long-term), County Carlow Spiritual Highlights Tour, St. Laserians Cathedral, Adelaide Memorial Church, Carlow College St. Patricks, Carlow Cathedral

**Norman Strongholds:** St. Mullins, Carlow Castle with river linkages, Carlow Castles Trail



Figure 2: Visitor Experience and Product Development Themes and Sub-themes

### Big Houses & Beautiful Gardens

**Ireland’s Big House Capital:** Altamont House and Gardens, Duckett’s Grove, Huntington Castle, Borris House, Lisnavagh House, Carlow Big Houses Festival

**Blooming Gardens:** Altamont Gardens and Walled Garden, Carlow Garden Festival, Duckett’s Grove Walled Gardens, Arboretum Home and Garden Heaven, Leighlinbridge, Carlow Garden Trail



### Valleys Views and Vales

**Do it the Barrow Way:** *The Barrow Corridor Recreational, Tourism and Commercial Product Identification Study* (with actions updated and refined), watersports hubs, loop walks, Carlow Town Hub for the Barrow Way

**Reach for the Sky:** *Carlow Outdoor Recreation Strategy*, Adventure Centre (mobile), walking hubs at Borris and Myshall, Columban Way, link Kildavin/Clonegal

**Slaney Excursions:** *Carlow Outdoor Recreation Strategy*, Rathvilly River Trail, angling, kayaking

**Room to Breathe:** Countryside towns and villages and walks, scenic drives, loop walks, cycling routes, urban realm, Blueway sites, Borris Viaduct



### Inspired by Carlow

**Rejoice and Revel:** Carlow Arts Festival, new Carlow Outdoor Adventure Festival, Big Houses Festival, International Achievers Summer School, Borris House Festival of Writing and Ideas, Pan Celtic Festival, Riverfest/Barrow Regatta, Emigrants Trail

**Carlow Cultural Quarter:** *Carlow Art Science attraction feasibility study*, VISUAL, Carlow County Museum, Carlow College, St. Patrick’s, Carlow Library, Carlow Cathedral, Carlow Tourist Office, urban realm





**Strengthening the capacity of the County Carlow tourism industry** is the focus of **Pillar 3**. This includes recommendations to:

- develop alternative livelihoods for Carlow residents;
- support the capacity of owners of key attractions;
- support tourism providers to develop saleable itineraries including day tour and multi-day tour packages that are aligned with Ireland's Ancient East;
- support local sourcing to increase local revenue retention and build local pride;
- identify training needs; and
- encourage tourism related enterprises to reduce their impact on the environment.

Recommendations regarding **partnership development** are discussed in **Pillar 4**. These include:

- collaborative development and promotion of tourism at a regional level to enable economies of scale and a strategic approach;
- inter-county itineraries and trail development;
- encouraging greater buy-in from the local community through a Carlow Tourism Ambassador programme;
- strategic discussions between Carlow County Council, Carlow Tourism and key agencies such as OPW, Waterways Ireland, Coillte and Ireland's Uplands Council.

**Brand and Marketing Communication recommendations (Pillar 5)** seek to raise the profile of County Carlow as a visitor destination in a way that leverages the marketing and investment in the Ireland's Ancient East brand and targets visitors for whom the Carlow offer would appeal. **The primary opportunity for County Carlow to drive growth in the target overseas visitor market is in continuing and developing collaboration with Fáilte Ireland as part of Ireland's Ancient East.** It is a recommendation that Carlow Tourism prioritise collaborative marketing initiatives under the Ireland's Ancient East brand, including participation in the 'Tales of Two

Worlds' Visitor Experience Development Plan, ongoing training opportunities and other initiatives developed under the brand. Recommendations include those related to:

- measures to evaluate resident and visitor satisfaction;
- a brand relaunch in the domestic market with a new strapline;
- a new County Carlow Food and Drink Trail based on a County Carlow Food Network;
- measures to raise awareness of the County Carlow offer, including:
  - » driving awareness of the Carlow offer through use of social media and digital influencers;
  - » targeting corporate companies in Dublin with younger demographic employees for weekend activities and entertainment;
  - » encouraging greater Carlow local community awareness of the Carlow tourism offer through open days and promotion e.g. 'Spend a day in Carlow', 'Come and Try It', encouraging use of local walks;
  - » encouraging greater tourism trade awareness of the Carlow tourism offer through familiarisation events;
  - » targeting overseas students and their families at IT Carlow, developing packages that would appeal and encourage out of season engagement;
  - » attending national and international trade and consumer fairs with a focus on increasing international visitors to County Carlow including World Travel Market in London, ITB in Berlin and Meitheal, CMT Stuttgart, Holiday World Dublin and Bloom subject to the availability of funding;
  - » defining and promoting saleable itineraries which include an experiential aspect, matching motivators of market segments, working with Fáilte Ireland and aligning with Ireland's Ancient East.
- communication and collaboration measures, including:
  - » collaborative marketing initiatives under the Ireland's Ancient East brand;

» spreading visitors throughout the South East and Ireland Ancient East regions.

- digital marketing strategy.

As part of the strategy **thirteen catalytic actions** have been highlighted that have potential to achieve positive change including:

- *establish a Blackstairs Mountain Task Group* (action 01.04) and support actions in the *Carlow Outdoor Recreation Strategy*;
- Implement a coherent and consistent *signage and wayfinding strategy* (action 01.05);
- *Develop a feasibility study for a new flagship attraction in Carlow Town* which links the industrial and scientific historic sites, ancestors and experiences throughout County Carlow. (action 02.01);
- *Commission a new feasibility study into, and seek funding for, the collaborative upgrade of the St. Mullins monastery site and Norman Motte* as an integrated visitor experience in partnership with OPW and the local community (action 02.04);
- *Develop a County Carlow Spiritual Highlights Tour* (action 02.05), a *Carlow Castles Trail* linking key sites in the county (action 02.08) and a *Carlow Emigrant Trail* (02.25);
- *Work with OPW to develop Altamont House and Gardens as a significant visitor experience* for County Carlow (action 02.09);
- *Identify the key strategic projects required to enhance the attractiveness of Duckett's Grove* as a visitor attraction and seek funding to implement these projects (action 02.10);
- *Work with Waterways Ireland to implement, update and revisit actions outlined in The Barrow Corridor Recreational, Tourism and Commercial Product Identification Study* (action 02.12);

- *Deliver a Fáilte Ireland Destination Towns Agenda for County Carlow* including the implementation of the *Carlow Town Regeneration Vision and Implementation Strategy* (RVIS) (action 02.26);
- *Support tourism providers and domestic and overseas tour operators to develop day tour or multi-day tour packages* (action 03.03);
- *Discuss, identify, and prioritise collaborative opportunities for clustered and joint experience development and promotion of tourism to include inter-county itineraries* e.g. Ireland's Ancient East International Gateway Garden Festival (action 04.02);
- *Raise awareness and promote* – use of influencers, targeting large corporate companies, encouraging greater Carlow community and trade awareness of the Carlow tourism offer, targeting overseas students in IT Carlow and Carlow College, St. Patrick's, attending international trade and consumer fairs, promoting defined itineraries to target market associations (action 05.05);
- *Communicate and collaborate* – collaborative marketing initiatives under Ireland's Ancient East brand, engaging with Fáilte Ireland in development and implementation of VEDPs, hosting media visits and fam trips (action 05.06).

The strategy includes a comprehensive action plan with actions grouped under the five pillars and associated goals. Specific actions are highlighted for each pillar, identifying lead agency and partners, timeline for completing the action and key performance indicators.

To ensure the strategy meets desired objectives, and contributes towards Sustainable Development Goals, relevant measures regarding effective progress, monitoring and evaluation are included in Chapter Five.

Input was requested from all partner agencies identified in respect of actions and the final strategy was signed off by the Board of Carlow Tourism.

## 4.6 Action Plan

### Pillar 1: Destination Management

Goal: To reinforce destination management structures to ensure a coordinated approach to tourism development, that supports the growth of the County Carlow tourism economy.

	Action	Lead Agency		Partners	Timescale	Key Performance Indicator	Indicative Budget/ Potential Sources of funding € - annual	SDG Linkages
01.01	Work to agreed and pre-defined tourism development and promotional roles and responsibilities for all tourism stakeholders at county level including Carlow County Council, Carlow Tourism and the tourism sector, Fáilte Ireland, Carlow LCDC, Carlow County Development Partnership and County Carlow Chamber of Commerce to respond to the strategic goals arising from this strategy. Identify collaborative structures where required to deliver on goals.	Carlow County Council Carlow Tourism Fáilte Ireland Carlow LCDC Carlow County Development Partnership County Carlow Chamber of Commerce			2020-2021	Carlow County Council, Carlow Tourism and the tourism sector, Fáilte Ireland, Carlow LCDC, Carlow County Development Partnership and County Carlow Chamber of Commerce work to pre-defined roles.		<b>17</b> PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS
01.02	Source funding for new County Carlow Rural Recreation Officer role.	Carlow County Development Partnership (CCDP)		Carlow Outdoor Recreation Partnership (CORP)	2021	County Carlow Rural Recreation Officer post established.		<b>11</b> SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES
01.03	As part of the in <i>Carlow - Economic Development Strategy 2021-2027</i> ascertain the opportunities for economic benefit for tourism linked to developed heritage sites which have visitor experience potential.	Carlow County Council		Fáilte Ireland Carlow Tourism Carlow County Museum CHAS Cultural Venues Heritage Council	2020-2021	County Carlow heritage sites reviewed as part of the inCarlow Economic Development Strategy 2021-2027.		<b>9</b> INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE <b>11</b> SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES
01.04	Consider development of a Blackstairs Task Group, as part of a Carlow Outdoor Recreation Partnership, to implement actions outlined in the <i>Carlow Outdoor Recreation Strategy</i> .	Carlow Outdoor Recreation Partnership (CORP) - structure for delivery to emerge from within this group.			2021-2023	Blackstairs Task Group formed.		<b>3</b> GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING <b>8</b> DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH <b>9</b> INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE <b>11</b> SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES <b>13</b> CLIMATE ACTION <b>17</b> PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS
01.05	Undertake a tourism signage audit focusing on I. Motorway signage for key attractions II. Welcome signage at all county boundary points III. Directional signage within the county IV. Wayfinding signage in Carlow Town V. Review and maintain orientation signage at key visitor arrival points  Seek funding for the implementation of a coherent and consistent signage strategy arising from the audit, and consistent in some form with the approaches taken by neighbouring counties.  Complete using best practise examples from other Fáilte Ireland projects and interpretative toolkits.	Carlow County Council		Carlow Tourism TII NTA Fáilte Ireland Waterways Ireland Coillte OPW	2020-2023	Signage audit completed and implemented.	€20,000	<b>9</b> INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE <b>11</b> SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

	Action	Lead Agency		Partners	Timescale	Key Performance Indicator	Indicative Budget/Potential Sources of funding € - annual	SDG Linkages
01.06	Explore the opportunities surrounding the existing county Ring-A-Link services that provides for the needs of the local community and visitors, linking visitor arrival points with settlements and attraction clusters using examples and research from elsewhere e.g. Offaly Explorer Experience, Hook Peninsula Summer Service.	Carlow County Council		Ring-A-Link Carlow Tourism NTA Visitor attractions Hotel and accommodation providers Fáilte Ireland	2020-2025	Potential opportunities to connect public transport network established, linking hubs and experiences.		  
01.07	Strengthen and promote sustainable community inputs to the development of tourism at county level by: I. Facilitating an effective communication plan that enables and encourages active participation by all individuals and community groups with a vested interest to engage meaningfully in tourism in order to ensure tourism readiness. II. Develop be-spoke training plans and mentoring supports for communities to fully identify and maximise the impact of tourism in their host community by focusing on key assets and potential visitor experiences. III. Encourage and train communities to offer a complete tourism experience for visitors by identifying gaps through a cohesive approach based on models like the Smart Villages concept in Scotland. IV. Through linkage with appropriate funding schemes and other training and education providers, explore and develop bespoke training programmes which actively encourage greater knowledge and participation in tourism by the broader community to increase the county's tourism offering. V. Facilitate enhanced community representation on the Board of Carlow Tourism.	Carlow County Development Partnership		Carlow County Council (community section) Carlow PPN Community groups countywide Carlow Tourism Fáilte Ireland KCETB Carlow IT Private training providers Carlow LCDC	2020-2025	Greater involvement in community-based tourism. Increase in saleable offerings. Participation in decision making for community representatives on the Board of Carlow Tourism.	€5,000 - €10,000	  
01.08	Encourage and facilitate the provision of access for all for visitor accommodation, venues and activities and the availability of information on accessibility.	Carlow County Council		Carlow Tourism Tourism trade County Carlow Chamber of Commerce PPN Disability organisations including Cairdeas, BEAM, IWA, Delta Centre, Holy Angels and the Older Persons Forum	2020-2025	Annual increase in the number of Carlow tourism businesses with an access for all policy.		   
01.09	Establish a monitoring and evaluation sub-committee to overview and monitor the strategic delivery of all key actions, meeting on a monthly basis to review progress and to make revised recommendations in respect of strategy delivery as necessary. Additional partners to be invited to sit on this sub-committee as deemed appropriate.	Carlow County Council/ Carlow Tourism			2020 - 2025	Ongoing review of strategy to analyse success in implementation of goals and actions and identifying measurable outcomes.		  

**Pillar 2:**  
Visitor Experience and Product Development  
including Festivals and Events

Goal: Identify opportunities for product enhancement and visitor experience development that align with the vision and themes of the Ireland's Ancient East brand and with visitor target market segments.

	Action	Lead Agency		Partners	Timescale	Key Performance Indicator	Indicative Budget/Potential Sources of funding € - annual	SDG Linkages
02.01	Develop a feasibility study for a new flagship attraction in Carlow Town which links the industrial and scientific historic sites, ancestors and experiences throughout County Carlow.	Carlow County Council		Carlow College, St. Patrick's Carlow County Museum Carlow Library Fáilte Ireland Carlow Tourism	2021-2022	Feasibility Study commissioned.	€25,000 - €30,000	<div style="display: flex; flex-direction: column; gap: 5px;"> <div style="background-color: #c00000; color: white; padding: 2px; text-align: center;"><b>8</b> DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH</div> <div style="background-color: #ffc000; color: white; padding: 2px; text-align: center;"><b>11</b> SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES</div> <div style="background-color: #003366; color: white; padding: 2px; text-align: center;"><b>17</b> PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS</div> </div>

**Theme 1: A Journey through Time - Early Settlers**

	Action	Lead Agency		Partners	Timescale	Key Performance Indicator	Indicative Budget/Potential Sources of funding € - annual	SDG Linkages
02.02	Investigate the opportunities to enhance the visitor experience at the Brownshill Dolmen to include land acquisition, a coach and car park, improved site lines, enhanced site access and visitor interpretation. Explore associated funding opportunities.	Carlow County Council OPW		Carlow County Museum Carlow Tourism Fáilte Ireland CHAS	2021-2022	Opportunities identified to enhance Brownshill Dolmen. Funding secured for site enhancement.	€20,000 feasibility study. Potential sources of funding: Fáilte Ireland Capital funding/ LEADER programme	<div style="display: flex; flex-direction: column; gap: 5px;"> <div style="background-color: #ffc000; color: white; padding: 2px; text-align: center;"><b>11</b> SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES</div> <div style="background-color: #003366; color: white; padding: 2px; text-align: center;"><b>17</b> PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS</div> </div>
02.03	Consider development of a Bronze-age themed destination for north Carlow and south Wicklow in collaboration with Wicklow County Council e.g. with a focus on inter-county trails development and medium-term experience development opportunities.	Carlow County Council Wicklow County Council		Carlow County Museum Carlow Tourism Fáilte Ireland CHAS	2022-2025	Early Settlers theme explored.		<div style="display: flex; flex-direction: column; gap: 5px;"> <div style="background-color: #c00000; color: white; padding: 2px; text-align: center;"><b>8</b> DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH</div> <div style="background-color: #ffc000; color: white; padding: 2px; text-align: center;"><b>11</b> SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES</div> <div style="background-color: #003366; color: white; padding: 2px; text-align: center;"><b>17</b> PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS</div> </div>

**Ecclesiastical Era**

	Action	Lead Agency		Partners	Timescale	Key Performance Indicator	Indicative Budget/Potential Sources of funding € - annual	SDG Linkages
02.04	Commission new feasibility study into, and seek funding for, the collaborative upgrade of the St. Mullins monastery site and Norman motte as an integrated visitor experience in partnership with OPW and the local community.	Carlow County Council OPW		Fáilte Ireland Local community Carlow Tourism	2021	Feasibility study commissioned. Opportunities identified for enhancement of St. Mullins heritage site Visitor experience enhanced.	€25,000 - €30,000	<div style="display: flex; flex-direction: column; gap: 5px;"> <div style="background-color: #c00000; color: white; padding: 2px; text-align: center;"><b>8</b> DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH</div> <div style="background-color: #ffc000; color: white; padding: 2px; text-align: center;"><b>11</b> SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES</div> <div style="background-color: #003366; color: white; padding: 2px; text-align: center;"><b>17</b> PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS</div> </div>

## Ecclesiastical Era

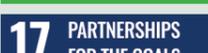
	Action	Lead Agency	Partners		Timescale	Key Performance Indicator	Indicative Budget/Potential Sources of funding € - annual	SDG Linkages
02.05	Develop one day County Carlow Spiritual Highlights Tour with a focus on 6-8 key ecclesiastical sites.  Progressively upgrade the visitor experience and interpretation at these sites.		Members of the Carlow Trails of the Saints Committee: Carlow County Council Carlow County Museum Carlow Tourism CHAS Carlow College, St. Patrick's IT Carlow Other partners for inclusion OPW Fáilte Ireland		2020-2021	County Carlow Spiritual Highlights Tour developed. Visitor experience enhancements identified, and funding opportunities explored.	€2,000 (soft copy flyer and social media exposure). Potential source of funding: Town and Village programme	  
02.06	Investigate opportunity to enhance the visitor experience at Clonmore Castle and monastic site to include enhanced trail network and associated visitor access, and site interpretation.	Carlow County Council	OPW Carlow Tourism Fáilte Ireland CHAS		2022-2025	Opportunities identified to enhance visitor experience at Clonmore Castle.		  

## Norman Strongholds

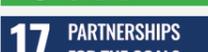
	Action	Lead Agency	Partners		Timescale	Key Performance Indicator	Indicative Budget/Potential Sources of funding € - annual	SDG Linkages
02.07	Examine potential for enhancing public realm at Carlow Castle and with linkages to River Barrow.	Carlow County Council	OPW Carlow Town Development Forum Carlow County Museum Carlow Tourism Fáilte Ireland		2023	Identify opportunities for public realm enhancement at Carlow Castle.		     
02.08	Develop a Carlow Castles Trail linking key sites in the county.	Carlow Tourism/ Carlow County Museum	Carlow County Council OPW Fáilte Ireland		2020-2021	Carlow Castles Trail developed.	€4,000 (soft copy flyer and website and social media exposure)	  

## Theme 2: Big Houses & Beautiful Gardens

### Ireland's Big House Capital

	Action	Lead Agency		Partners	Timescale	Key Performance Indicator	Indicative Budget/Potential Sources of funding € - annual	SDG Linkages
02.09	Work with OPW to develop Altamont House and Gardens as a significant visitor experience for County Carlow.	OPW		Carlow County Council Carlow Tourism Fáilte Ireland	2020-2025	Altamont House & Gardens visitor experience enhanced.		  
02.10	Identify the key strategic projects required to enhance the attractiveness of Duckett's Grove as a visitor attraction and seek funding to implement these projects.	Carlow County Council		Fáilte Ireland Carlow Tourism	2021-2023	Prioritise list of projects and seek funding for delivery.		   

### Blooming Gardens

	Action	Lead Agency		Partners	Timescale	Key Performance Indicator	Indicative Budget/Potential Sources of funding € - annual	SDG Linkages
02.11	<p>Continue to raise awareness of County Carlow's big houses and gardens through continued support for the Carlow Garden and Houses Trail, Carlow Garden Festival and Carlow's Big Houses Festival.</p> <p>Explore opportunities to develop a pilot garden bus tour in association with Ring a Link.</p>	Carlow Tourism/Carlow Garden Trail Committee		Carlow County Council Fáilte Ireland	2020-2025	<p>Annual Carlow Big Houses and Carlow Garden Festivals.</p> <p>Feasibility for pilot garden bus tour determined in collaboration with Ring-A-Link.</p>	€5,000 - €10,000 for updating of the Carlow Garden Trail to include print and soft copy collateral and signage upgrades.	   

## Theme 3: Valleys Views and Vales

### Do It The Barrow Way

	Action	Lead Agency		Partners	Timescale	Key Performance Indicator	Indicative Budget/Potential Sources of funding € - annual	SDG Linkages
02.12	Work with Waterways Ireland to update and revisit actions outlined in <i>The Barrow Corridor Recreational, Tourism and Commercial Product Identification Study</i> to cover water-based activities provision, Barrow Way walking route, support facilities, industrial heritage enhancement (e.g. use of lock houses as visitor accommodation), watersports hubs (e.g. Carlow Town Park, Graiguenamanagh/Tinnahinch, Clashganny, Bagenalstown and St. Mullins), universal angling access, fish stocks, orientation/directional/interpretative signage, and linkages to nearby heritage attractions.	Waterways Ireland Carlow County Council		Carlow Outdoor Recreation Partnership (CORP)	2020-2025	Support the delivery of <i>The Barrow Corridor Recreational, Tourism and Commercial Product Identification Study</i> .		       

## Theme 3: Valleys Views and Vales

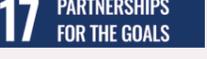
### Do It The Barrow Way

	Action	Lead Agency		Timescale	Key Performance Indicator	Indicative Budget/Potential Sources of funding € - annual	SDG Linkages
02.13	Investigate opportunity to develop loop walks between River Barrow and visitor hubs and to visitor attractions along the river corridor.	Carlow Outdoor Recreation Partnership (CORP)		2020-2025	River Barrow loop walks developed.	Potential source of funding: ORIS	      

### Reach for the Sky

	Action	Lead Agency		Timescale	Key Performance Indicator	Indicative Budget/Potential Sources of funding € - annual	SDG Linkages
02.14	Commissioning a feasibility study into and seeking funding for development of a new Adventure Centre or similar mobile facility as outlined in the <i>County Carlow Outdoor Recreation Strategy</i> , with potential multiple uses across outdoor recreation, arts, music and heritage.	Carlow Outdoor Recreation Partnership (CORP)		2021-2022	Feasibility study commissioned Adventure Centre/ Mobile Centre operational.	Feasibility study €20,000 - €25,000	    
02.15	Investigate opportunities to develop the walking offer in the Blackstairs including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Off-road link option between the end of the Wicklow Way and start of the South Leinster Way (Clonegal and Kildavin)</li> <li>- An off-road walking route between Borris and the Blackstairs. Establish a South Leinster Way Committee to involve all stakeholders and oversee the planned development, management and maintenance of the route</li> <li>- Columban Way Walking Trail (trailhead Myshall)</li> </ul>	Carlow Outdoor Recreation Partnership (CORP)		2020-2025	Blackstairs walking offer enhanced. Opportunities to increase dwell time in towns and villages. Functioning South Leinster Way Committee.	Potential source of funding: ORIS	     
02.16	Formal consultation with the Blackstairs Farming Group project to realise their objectives as they relate to outdoor recreation.	Carlow Outdoor Recreation Partnership (CORP)		2020	Shared projects with Blackstairs Farming Group. Opportunities for co-operation in respect of outdoor recreation.		     

### Slaney Excursions

	Action	Lead Agency		Timescale	Key Performance Indicator	Indicative Budget/Potential Sources of funding € - annual	SDG Linkages
02.17	Investigate opportunity to improve community and visitor access to the River Slaney including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Enhanced riverside pathways and facilitate river-based activities at Tullow</li> <li>- A 'Rathvilly River Trail'</li> </ul>	Carlow Outdoor Recreation Partnership (CORP)		2020-2025	Access to River Slaney improved. Increased opportunities for provision of river-based activities.	Outdoor Recreation Strategy budget	      

## Room to Breathe

	Action	Lead Agency		Partners	Timescale	Key Performance Indicator	Indicative Budget/ Potential Sources of funding € - annual	SDG Linkages
02.18	<p>Create opportunities to increase visitor dwell time in towns and villages through enhancement of the walking offer including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Feasibility study for the development of a walk/cycle trail between Saint Mullins and New Ross</li> <li>- Positioning Borris (by implementing measures as outlined in the <i>'Borris Our Vision' Study</i>), and Myshall as walking hubs, and Carlow Town as a hub for the River Barrow and Barrow Walking Way route</li> <li>- Developing loop walks between long distance walking routes and key towns and villages</li> <li>- Identify the process for the further development of the Borris Viaduct as a walking trail</li> <li>- Review of the Clashganny water recreation facility model</li> <li>- Support implementation of the walking development plan under the <i>Outdoor Recreation Strategy</i> which includes the potential for improved links across the River Barrow near Carlow IT back into Carlow Town and en-route to Milford</li> </ul>	Carlow Outdoor Recreation Partnership (CORP)			2020-2025	Town and village walking linkages and loops developed.	Potential source of funding: ORIS/ Outdoor Recreation Strategy budget	
02.19	<p>Create opportunities to increase visitor dwell time in towns and villages through enhancement of the cycling offer including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Assessment of potential for off-road greenways e.g. at Tullow and Bagenalstown</li> <li>- Review and continue to deliver existing and planned routes being developed by Carlow Sports Partnership</li> <li>- Consider inclusion of cycle routes on the Carlow Outdoors website</li> <li>- Support implementation of cycling development plan under the <i>Carlow Outdoor Recreation Strategy</i> which includes the potential for improved links across the River Barrow near Carlow IT back into Carlow Town and en-route to Milford along with the development of a short Greenway for recreational cycling</li> </ul>	Carlow Outdoor Recreation Partnership (CORP)			2021-2025	Enhanced cycling opportunities both on-road and off-road.	Potential source of funding: ORIS/ Outdoor Recreation Strategy budget	
02.20	<p>Enhance the public realm and visitor offer in Carlow's towns and villages to benefit residents and visitors including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Carlow – implementation of public realm measures identified under the <i>Carlow Town Regeneration Vision and Implementation Strategy (RVIS)</i> and the development of the Cultural Quarter, reflecting Destination Town principles. Ensure a range of actions are implemented to develop Carlow Town as a strategic visitor hub</li> <li>- Bagenalstown/Muine Bheag – develop signage and visitor infrastructure, undertake public realm enhancements in the town core and other measures as outlined in the <i>Bagenalstown Local Area Plan 2017-2023</i></li> <li>- Tullow – undertake physical public realm interventions such as signage and paving, consider a market or local outlet for food and craft</li> <li>- Borris – implement measures outlined in the <i>Borris – Our Vision</i> document including enhancing the public realm</li> </ul>	Carlow County Council		Carlow LCDC Carlow Tourism Fáilte Ireland Visitor Attractions	2020-2025	Measures undertaken to enhance the public realm in Carlow Town, Bagenalstown, Tullow and Borris.		
02.21	<p>Support delivery of the Carlow Outdoor Recreation Strategy including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Delivery of the <i>County Carlow Cycling and Walking Strategy</i> priority actions</li> <li>- Evaluate the connectivity of current cycling and walking products</li> <li>- Increase in awareness of, and the number of outdoor recreation programmes with seasonal county "Active Outdoors" programme and timetable</li> <li>- Seasonal outdoor recreation timetables and initiatives in urban play areas, formal gardens and trails</li> <li>- Support outdoor recreation in urban environments in County Carlow under the review of the current County Development Plan</li> </ul> <p>Support the development of additional outdoor recreation infrastructure in line with the County Carlow Walking and Cycling Implementation Plan.</p>	Carlow Outdoor Recreation Partnership (CORP)			2020-2025	<p>Increase in trail management, maintenance and development resources.</p> <p>Seasonal outdoor recreation activity timetables and events.</p>	Potential source of funding: ORIS/ Outdoor Recreation Strategy budget	
02.22	Explore opportunities to develop existing stand-alone Blueway sites based on the eat, stay and play principle.	Carlow Outdoor Recreation Partnership (CORP)			2022 – 2025	Enhance opportunities for outdoor recreation.		

Rejoice and Revel

	Action	Lead Agency		Partners	Timescale	Key Performance Indicator	Indicative Budget/ Potential Sources of funding € - annual	SDG Linkages
02.23	<p>Continue investment in existing flagship festivals such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Borris House Festival of Writing and Ideas</li> <li>- Carlow Arts Festival</li> <li>- Carlow Garden Festival</li> <li>- Pan Celtic Festival</li> </ul> <p>Consider developing shoulder season new events in collaboration with strategic partners such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Carlow Outdoor Adventure Festival incorporating an adventure event similar in scale to Reeks 5, based in Borris, that drives off/shoulder season visitors and that includes accommodation and travel packages</li> <li>- County wide climate change/eco/green festival</li> <li>- International Achievers Festival</li> <li>- Big Houses Festival</li> <li>- Riverfest or Barrow Regatta</li> </ul>	Carlow County Council		<p>Carlow LCDC/CCDP Carlow Tourism Carlow Outdoor Recreation Partnership (CORP) Festival Organisers Fáilte Ireland</p>	2020	<p>Ongoing investment to grow flagship festivals.</p> <p>Facilitation of new festivals.</p>		<p><b>8</b> DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH</p> <p><b>11</b> SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES</p> <p><b>17</b> PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS</p>
02.24	<p>Review schedule and commercial viability of festivals and events, and from findings develop a new festivals and events strategy. Key elements to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Successful themed festivals explored to be enhanced or extended or collaboration established to operate festivals going forward</li> <li>- Identification of potential large events and commence process of engaging with event organisers to host within the County of Carlow</li> <li>- Work with key stakeholders to create themed after-dark night economy to meet international visitor expectations to target international visitor</li> <li>- Continue to develop a continuous and coordinated schedule of events year round and promote same through proactive marketing campaigns on and offline and via stakeholder channels</li> </ul>	Carlow County Council			2021	Festival and Events Strategy completed.		<p><b>8</b> DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH</p> <p><b>11</b> SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES</p> <p><b>17</b> PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS</p>
02.25	<p>Consider development of an Emigrant Trail that celebrates the county diaspora and further twinning and diaspora objectives.</p>	Carlow County Museum/ Carlow Tourism			2021	Carlow Emigrant Trail established.		<p><b>8</b> DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH</p> <p><b>11</b> SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES</p> <p><b>17</b> PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS</p>

## The Cultural Quarter

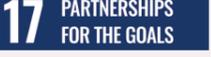
	Action	Lead Agency	Partners	Timescale	Key Performance Indicator	Indicative Budget/Potential Sources of funding € - annual	SDG Linkages
02.26	Delivery of a Fáilte Ireland Destination Towns Agenda for County Carlow including the implementation of the <i>Carlow Town Regeneration Vision and Implementation Strategy (RVIS)</i> with particular focus on the tourism potential of the Cultural Quarter, River Barrow, traditional town centre, Carlow Castle, public activity spaces and other cultural and heritage assets.	Carlow County Council	Fáilte Ireland Carlow College, St. Patrick's Carlow County Museum Carlow Cathedral Carlow Library Carlow Tourism Carlow Town Development Forum County Carlow Chamber of Commerce	2020-2025	Carlow Cultural Quarter defined and developed.		   
02.27	Complete a review of the potential of VISUAL by initiating a shared long-term tourism plan to drive increasing numbers of international and domestic visitors to the venue.	Carlow County Council/ VISUAL	Carlow College, St. Patrick's Carlow County Museum Carlow Library Fáilte Ireland	2021 - 2022	Enhanced recognition of VISUAL amongst national and international visitors. Increased visitor numbers.	€25,000 - €30,000	

### Pillar 3:

#### Capacity Development

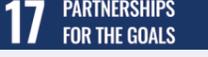
Goal: To strengthen the capacity of industry to create and promote experiences that will attract priority segments from key markets

	Action	Lead Agency	Partners	Timescale	Key Performance Indicator	Indicative Budget/Potential Sources of funding € - annual	SDG Linkages
03.01	Determine the appropriate linkages and training interventions required through inter-agency co-operation and collaboration, to develop high quality full-time and part-time tourism positions.	Regional Skills Forum	IT Carlow (Lifelong Learning) Carlow County Council / LEO Skillnets CKETB Carlow Tourism Fáilte Ireland Tourism trade Private training providers PPN County Carlow Chamber of Commerce	2021-2025	Increase employment opportunities for Carlow residents in the tourism industry.		    

	Action	Lead Agency	Partners		Timescale	Key Performance Indicator	Indicative Budget/Potential Sources of funding € - annual	SDG Linkages
03.02	Support capacity of owners of publicly accessible big houses to develop compelling visitor attractions in the context of the 'Tale of Two Worlds' experience theme within the Ireland's Ancient East brand.	Carlow Tourism/ Fáilte Ireland	Service providers Carlow LCDC		2020-2025	Visitor experience enhanced at publicly accessible big houses.	€10,000	  
03.03	Support tourism providers and domestic and overseas tour operators to develop day tour or multi-day tour packages to include transport (small group bus and/or train), accommodation, garden tours and other visitor experiences that are aligned with Ireland's Ancient East themes.  Facilitate and encourage face to face meetings by key industry members with ITOA and Meitheal partners, e.g. Abbey Tours etc. to engage and drive international visitors (to be completed after itineraries are defined).  Facilitate fam trips/education workshop for ITOA members to experience first-hand the international market ready visitor attractions and Carlow product.	Carlow Tourism	Carlow Tourism members Fáilte Ireland ITOA Overseas tour operators Domestic coach tour operators (CTTC) Carlow LCDC		2021-2025	Series of experience tours developed.  Meetings held with key representatives of ITOA and domestic and international tour operators.  ITOA members invited to annual fam visits to County Carlow.	€2,000 – face to face meetings with ITOA and domestic and international partners  €2,000 per fam trip of ITOA members	   
03.04	Support tourism providers to develop bundled food and drink offers that involve food, drink, accommodation and activity product throughout the county. Encourage tourism businesses including hotels, attractions, cafés and restaurants to source local produce to increase local revenue from tourism.	Carlow Tourism	Carlow County Council Service providers Fáilte Ireland – Taste the Island		2021-2023	Bundled food and drink offer developed and promoted.	€10,000	     
03.05	Create an overview of training opportunities and information on the Carlow Tourism website and via e-zines linking to supports provided by Fáilte Ireland, Carlow LEO and other business supports.  Provide strong training supports and benefits package through: - Assessment of needs - Programme of supports to address needs  Facilitate training and education opportunities for those currently in employment who wish to up-skill within the tourism sector or those seeking new employment in the sector by informing and disseminating information on current training opportunities.	Carlow LEO, Fáilte Ireland	Carlow Tourism Tourism industry members Carlow LCDC KCETB Carlow/Kilkenny Skillnets County Carlow Chamber of Commerce		2020-2025	Tourism trade engaged in Fáilte Ireland and Carlow LEO business supports.  Needs assessed and capacity building measures delivered.  Tourism trade engaged in services that support, develop, and progress their businesses.	€1,000 - No significant budget required due to linkage with existing resources.	   
03.06	Encourage and facilitate tourism businesses to reduce their impact upon the environment and carbon footprint by reducing their energy demand, increasing recycling, minimising single plastic use and utilising best practice procurement policy where possible by disseminating best practice information, case studies and workshops.	Carlow County Council (Environment/LEO)	Fáilte Ireland 3 Counties Energy Agency Eco Tourism Ireland Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Carlow Tourism		2020-2025	Best practice information and case studies provided to tourism trade and workshops held per annum to communicate best practice.	€1,000 per annum	       

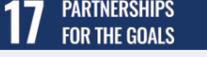
**Pillar 4:**  
Partnership Development

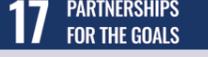
Goal: Identify internal and external collaborative opportunities between public, private and community sectors that maximise return on investment and that facilitate the development of enterprises and experiences around a shared vision and ambition.

	Action	Lead Agency	Partners		Timescale	Key Performance Indicator	Indicative Budget/Potential Sources of funding € - annual	SDG Linkages
04.01	Work with neighbouring local authorities to collaboratively develop inter-county linkages e.g. pedestrian bridge between St. Mullins and County Kilkenny across the River Barrow with looped walk along the Wexford stretch of the river to return to St. Mullins; and Greenway to New Ross via former rail network.	Carlow County Council	Kilkenny County Council Wexford County Council Waterford County Council National Trails Office Fáilte Ireland CCDP and KLP		2021-2025	Collaborative projects identified with neighbouring local authorities to enhance inter-county recreational offer.  Projects developed to best practice recreational guidelines.		   
04.02	Discuss, identify, and prioritise collaborative opportunities for clustered and joint experience development and promotion of tourism to include inter-county itineraries e.g. Ireland's Ancient East International Gateway Garden Festival.	Carlow Tourism	Carlow County Council Carlow LCDC CCDP and other LEADER partnerships in the region Fáilte Ireland Local Authority Tourism Officers for the Ireland Ancient East region County Carlow Chamber of Commerce		2020-2025	Collaborative experience development and marketing initiatives between County Carlow and neighbouring counties.		   
04.03	Introduce a local Carlow Tourism Ambassador/Champion initiative using key learnings from the Gathering programme.	Carlow Tourism	Carlow County Council Fáilte Ireland Carlow PPN		2020-2021	Carlow Tourism Ambassador/Champion activated.		   
04.04	Hold key conversations with external partners including Fáilte Ireland and key members of state agencies to discuss timelines and collaborative opportunities in relation to tourism product and visitor experience development.	Carlow County Council	Carlow Tourism Fáilte Ireland OPW Waterways Ireland Coillte Irish Uplands Council National Trails Office IT Carlow		2020-2021	Meeting held with identified state agencies to discuss timelines and collaborative opportunities in relation to tourism product and experience development.		  

**Pillar 5:**  
Brand and Marketing Communications

Goal: Raise the profile of County Carlow as a high-quality visitor destination that leverages the Ireland's Ancient East brand and attracts more visitors matched to the county's tourism offer.

	Action	Lead Agency	Partners		Timescale	Key Performance Indicator	Indicative Budget/Potential Sources of funding € - annual	SDG Linkages
05.01	<p>Consider bi-annual community and visitor surveys:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online local resident surveys to gauge attitudes to and support for tourism development in host communities</li> <li>• Visitor satisfaction surveys to examine motivation and satisfaction</li> </ul> <p>Focus on metrics that benefit communities including growth of revenue from tourism bed-nights, and community satisfaction regarding tourism.</p>	Carlow Tourism	Tourism industry and community groups Carlow PPN TY students Private research company IT Carlow - Masters students		2021-2025	<p>Bi-annual resident tourism and visitor survey introduced.</p> <p>Key metrics of success identified and reviewed including tourism revenue growth and community satisfaction.</p>	€10,000 if engaging market research company	    
05.02	Re-launch Carlow Tourism brand in the domestic market with use of new strapline that captures the Carlow offer. Follow with dedicated launch to the tourism trade within the county.	Carlow Tourism	Fáilte Ireland Tourism trade		2020	Carlow tourism brand re-launched in the domestic audience and tourism providers educated as to its ethos and application.	€7,000	 
05.03	Consider re-launch of a County Carlow Food and Drink Trail following successful establishment of a County Carlow food network in the context of the new Food and Drink Strategy.	Carlow Tourism Carlow County Council	Fáilte Ireland Taste the Island Food and drink providers		2021-2023	Established food network to raise the profile of the County's offering and County Carlow Food and Drink Trail launched.		     
05.04	Budget Planning and Activity Plans including funding agreed to enable initiation of immediate marketing and promotional actions to actively develop domestic and international business for the following three years.	Carlow Tourism	Carlow County Council Carlow LCDC		2021-2023	<p>Three-year budget planning and activity plans created.</p> <p>Enhanced marketing.</p>		  

	Action	Lead Agency		Partners	Timescale	Key Performance Indicator	Indicative Budget/Potential Sources of funding € - annual	SDG Linkages
05.05	Raising Awareness and Promotion Drive awareness of Carlow offer through use of social media and digital influencers.	Carlow Tourism		Tourism Ireland Fáilte Ireland Influencers	2020-2025	Domestic and international influencers targeted for promotion of County Carlow tourism offer.		     
	Target large corporate companies in Dublin with younger demographic employees for weekend activities and entertainment.	Carlow Tourism		IT (Facebook, Google, LinkedIn, Twitter, Zendesk, Intel) Legal, financial and insurance companies	2020-2021	Promotion of visitor experiences to 20 large companies in Dublin, prioritising those with high numbers of Millennial age staff.		
	Encourage greater Carlow local community awareness of the Carlow tourism offer through open days and promotion e.g. 'Spend a day in Carlow', 'Come and Try It', and encouraging use of local walks.	Carlow Tourism		Carlow PPN Carlow resident and business community incl County Carlow Chamber of Commerce	2020	Open days and Come and Try It days held for Carlow residents and student.		
	Encourage greater tourism trade awareness of the Carlow tourism offer through familiarisation events.	Carlow Tourism		Carlow tourism trade	2020	Regular familiarisation days held for Carlow Tourism members.		
	Target overseas students' families at IT Carlow, through the provision of themed itineraries which can be communicated from the International Office in IT Carlow. Would appeal and encourage out of season engagement.	Carlow Tourism		IT Carlow	2020-2021	Range of activity experience packages developed specifically for overseas students and their families at IT Carlow.		
	Explore the opportunities for Teagasc, Carlow College, St. Patrick's and IT Carlow to secure niche scientific, environmental and educational conferences that could be attracted to Carlow.	IT Carlow/ Carlow College, St. Patrick's and Teagasc		Carlow Tourism	2021	Number of conferences secured.		
	Explore the potential of VISUAL as a unique and alternative venue for day conferences in partnership with local hotels.	VISUAL/hotel providers		Carlow Tourism	2021	Number of day conferences held in VISUAL.		
	Attend national and international consumer fairs with a focus on increasing international visitors to County Carlow including World Travel Market in London, ITB in Berlin and Meitheal. Continue to attend the present domestic consumer shows annually e.g. The National Ploughing Championship, Bloom, Active Retired Showcase and The Holiday World Show.	Carlow Tourism		Tourism Ireland Fáilte Ireland	2020-2025	Carlow Tourism attend at least three international travel consumer fairs annually to promote the Carlow B2B and B2C.		
	Through offline and online channels, communicate defined itineraries, targeting the active retired market, gardening clubs on the island of Ireland, golf societies, bridge clubs, ladies' associations – Macra na Feirme, Culturally Curious, Great Escapers, Connected Families and Empty Nesters.	Carlow Tourism		Target market associations	2020	Promote defined itineraries to key target markets for domestic audience.		

	Action	Lead Agency	Partners		Timescale	Key Performance Indicator	Indicative Budget/Potential Sources of funding € - annual	SDG Linkages
05.06	<p>Communications and Collaboration Prioritise continued participation in collaborative marketing initiatives under the Ireland's Ancient East brand with Fáilte Ireland and neighbouring counties.</p> <p>Engage with Tourism Ireland and Industry and Co-operative marketing opportunities, e.g. Ireland.com community.</p> <p>Engage with Fáilte Ireland in the development and implementation of Visitor Experience Development Plans.</p> <p>Work strongly with both Fáilte Ireland International Publicity department and Tourism Ireland, to host media visits and hosted buyer's fam trips to the region.</p>	Carlow Tourism	Fáilte Ireland Carlow Garden Trail Tourism Officer - Carlow/KK/Wexford/ Wicklow		2020-2025	<p>IAE collaborative marketing initiatives.</p> <p>Continued engagement with key stakeholders with regards to communications.</p>		 
5.07	<p>Digital Marketing Define annual KPI's to be achieved Website content reviewed and relevant to increase traffic to the site Create an annual content calendar detailing planned posts for social media activity Subject to funding enhance and redesign of carlowtourism.com/to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflection of brand and tagline changes</li> <li>• Enhancement of user experience</li> <li>• Review of overall site content and SEO</li> <li>• Populate new Carlow Tourism tagline</li> <li>• Homepage – content reviewed to show Top 10 reasons to visit Carlow/Things to do sections and links to suggested programmes/itineraries of 1/2/3 nights stays aimed at the defined market segments in the strategy</li> <li>• Video footage created and embedded to communicate the Carlow offer. Video footage to focus on the specific identified themes which can be used for both domestic and promotional purposes</li> <li>• Continually engage with emerging technologies for the benefit of the tourism sector</li> </ul>	Carlow Tourism			<p>2020-2021</p> <p>2020-2021</p> <p>2020</p> <p>2020-2021</p>	<p>Digital marketing objectives achieved.</p> <p>Website content reviewed and updated.</p> <p>Annual social media content calendar created.</p> <p>Funding obtained to enhance Carlow Tourism website.</p>		 
5.08	<p>Strengthen the outdoors recreation brand and messaging within County Carlow based on a “soft and slow” approach.</p> <p>Identify how Carlow and neighbouring county outdoor recreation branding sits within the Ireland's Ancient East brand.</p>	Carlow Outdoor Recreation Partnership (CORP)			2025	County Carlow outdoor recreation brand and messaging reviewed and enhanced.		  

# COUNTY CARLOW

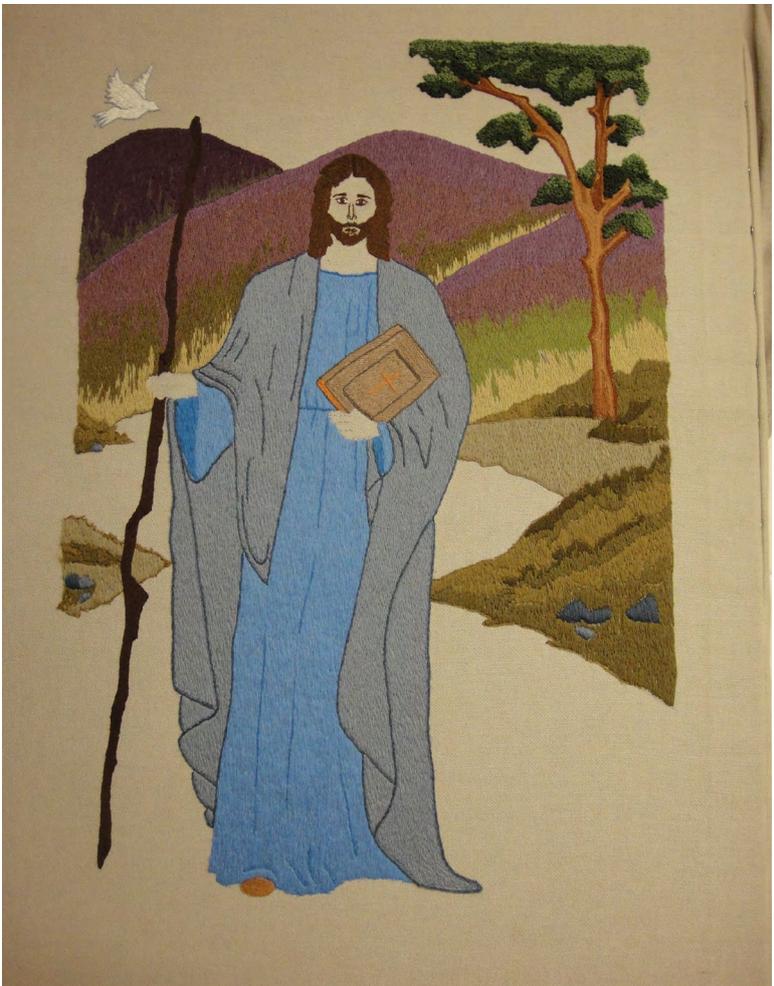
## Tourism Strategy and Action Plan

2020 - 2025



Prepared by:

 **Future Analytics**  
Planning | Research | Economics



Prepared by:



Prepared for:



Supported by:

